

DARTFORD

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet Advisory Panel B

A meeting of the above Panel will be held on

Monday 2 December 2024

Councillor M J Davis (Chairman)
Councillor D Swinerd (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor J Burrell
Councillor R M Currans
Councillor L H K Edie
Councillor A Gaskin
Councillor D A Hammock
Councillor J S Hawkes
Councillor R A S Jones

Councillor A R Lloyd
Councillor C Pearce
Councillor R S L Perfitt
Councillor M I Peters
Councillor D A Povey
Councillor A S Sandhu, MBE
Councillor A M Vaduva
Councillor P W Whapshott

Cabinet

A meeting of the above will be held on

Thursday 5 December 2024

Councillor J A Kite, MBE
(Chairman)
Councillor C M Gale
Councillor R J Wells

Councillor C J Shippam
(Vice-Chairman)
Councillor D J Mote

Councillor S H Brown
Councillor T A Oliver

Both meetings will be held at 7.00pm at the Civic Centre, Dartford



Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services
Wednesday 27 November 2024

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CABINET ADVISORY PANEL B
Monday 2 December 2024

CABINET
Thursday 5 December 2024

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of interest from Members including the terms(s) of the Grant of Dispensation (if any) by the Audit Board or Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services.

3. **Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 October 2024 (Pages 1 - 24)**

Summary:

To consider the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet which took place on 24 October 2024.

Recommendation:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet which took place on 24 October 2024 be agreed as an accurate record.

4. **Urgent Items**

The Chairman will announce his decision as to whether there are any urgent items and their position on the agenda.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PUBLIC

5. **To receive the minutes of the Cabinet Advisory Panel held on 2 December 2024**

To follow

6. **References from Committees**

None at this stage.

A - Strategies, Policies, Key Decisions, Consultations

7. Consultation on Social Housing Rents 2024 (Pages 25 - 30)

Summary:

To consider the Council's proposed response to the Government's consultation on social housing rents.

Recommendation:

That the Council's response on social housing rents, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved and submitted to Government by 23 December 2024.

B - Non-Key Decisions, Monitoring Reports

8. Draft Local Lettings Plan for Gilbert Close New Build Council Housing Development (Pages 31 - 40)

Summary:

To consider a draft Local Lettings Plan for the Council's new build housing development at Gilbert Close, Swanscombe, Dartford.

Recommendation:

That the draft Local Lettings Plan attached at Appendix A to the report be approved.

9. Community Infrastructure Levy Monitoring 2024 (Pages 41 - 80)

Summary:

To consider a report which updates Members on the potential infrastructure projects that could be supported by funding secured through the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) within the context of the level of CIL funding received by the Council up to September 2024. The report also details the progress that has been made over the past year on the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects as identified in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Programme. The report also explains the progress that has been made regarding the CIL funding retained by the Council for the unparished areas of the Borough.

Recommendations:

1. That the CIL income received by the Council, as set out in Appendix A to the report, including the level of CIL funding retained to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects, be noted;
2. That the projects identified in Part 2 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and covered in paragraphs 5.3 to 5.6 of the report be noted

as the current strategic infrastructure projects identified as potentially requiring the allocation of CIL funding;

3. That the revised and updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved for publication and form the basis for ongoing liaison with the relevant infrastructure providers on the further development and delivery of the identified schemes and inform consideration of decisions on the allocation of CIL funding;
4. That, once individual projects are sufficiently progressed to demonstrate they are deliverable, further reports be submitted to Cabinet, for decisions on the release of CIL funding contributions towards those projects; and
5. That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning Services to publish the Infrastructure Funding Statement incorporating the CIL income shown in Appendix A to the report and the updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan shown in Appendix B to the report, in accordance with Regulation 121A of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) (“the CIL Regulations”).

10. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2025/26 (Pages 81 - 84)

Summary:

To recommend the rolling forward of the Local Scheme of Support for Council Tax 2024/25, effective from 1 April 2025.

Recommendation:

That the General Assembly of the Council be recommended to roll forward the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25, to be effective from 1 April 2025.

11. Financial Contributions to Parish Councils (Pages 85 - 90)

Summary:

To agree the level of financial contributions to be paid to Parish and Town Councils in 2025/26 and to recommend accordingly.

Recommendations:

1. That, subject to recommendations 2 and 3 below, the following contributions be made to Parish and Town Councils, to compensate for lost council tax income in local areas from the council tax support scheme:

£

Bean	334
Darenth	1,923
Longfield	631
Southfleet	198
Stone	7,021
Sutton at Hone and Hawley	1,737
Swanscombe and Greenhithe	14,435
Wilmington	1,317

2. That, the contributions be made subject to the Parish and Town Councils submitting suitably analysed details of estimated net expenditure for the ensuing year by 31 January 2025, and actual net expenditure for the preceding year no later than six months after the end of the 2024/25 financial year, in a format prescribed by the Council; and
3. That the payments be made in two equal instalments, the first on 30 April 2025 (or next working day) and the second, the latter of 30 September 2025 (or next working day) or seven days following receipt of the Parish or Town Councils' 2023/24 accounts, certified as correct by their Clerks.

C - Items for Information, Noting, Endorsing

12. **Revenue Budget Monitoring 2024/25 - Projected Outturn (Pages 91 - 106)**

Summary:

To inform Members of the Projected Outturn on the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account, with the reasons for significant variances.

Recommendation:

That Members note the projected outturn position for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account, as set out respectively, in Appendices A, B and C to the report.

13. **Capital Budget Monitoring 2024/25 - Projected Outturn (Pages 107 - 116)**

Summary:

To inform Cabinet of the progress to date on the schemes in the approved Capital Programme, and to report the latest position on capital resources.

Recommendation:

That the progress made to date as described in the report and in appendices A & B to the report, on the 2024/25 Capital Programme, be noted.

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DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 24 October 2024 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor J A Kite, MBE (Chairman)
Councillor C J Shippam (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor S H Brown
Councillor Mrs C M Gale
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor T Oliver
Councillor R J Wells

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor A R Lloyd
Sarah Martin, Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services
Peter Dosad, Director of Housing and Public Protection
Caroline Hicks, Director of Growth and Community
Toby Howes, Democratic Services

56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

57. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

58. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2024

The Cabinet considered the minutes of its meeting which took place on 26 September 2024.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet which took place on 26 September 2024 be confirmed as an accurate record.

59. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

60. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CABINET ADVISORY PANEL HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2024

The Cabinet considered the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet Advisory Panel A which took place on 21 October 2024 and had regard to the Advisory Panel's views throughout the meeting.

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61. REFERENCES FROM COMMITTEES

There were no references from other committees.

62. CLIMATE CHANGE - NET ZERO STRATEGY

The Cabinet considered a report which presented Dartford Borough Council's draft Climate Change Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy outlined the Council's strategic commitment to addressing the causes and impact of Climate Change as well as wider sustainability and how the Council aims to deliver its own target of reaching Net Zero by 2030.

The draft strategy was presented to Cabinet for approval to consult at its meeting on 21 September 2023 and an 8 week public consultation period subsequently took place. The consultation included all key stakeholders via an online survey as well as local workshop sessions in the Borough to inform the development of the Strategy and accompanying Action Plan, and priorities and targets. The results of the consultation were reported in Appendix A to the report.

Key Priority	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total Strongly Agree / Agree
DBC Organisational Emissions	46%	24%	9%	15%	7%	70%
Transport	44%	21%	10%	19%	6%	65%
Built Environment	49%	23%	7%	14%	8%	72%
Energy Generation	49%	27%	8%	12%	4%	76%
Waste	59%	24%	7%	7%	3%	83%
Land Use & Biodiversity	69%	19%	4%	6%	2%	88%
Governance & Finance	46%	21%	9%	16%	8%	67%
Collaboration & Engagement	50%	28%	9%	10%	3%	78%

Over 300 responses were received. Overall, respondents were generally satisfied with the Council's vision and priorities for the Net Zero Strategy, as highlighted in the table below:

Other key headlines were:

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- 73% of respondents feel Very Concerned or Fairly Concerned about Climate Change.
- 70% of respondents Strongly Agree / Agree with the Council's vision and aims for the Strategy.
- 59% of respondents have taken action to help tackle climate change with the top actions including; Recycling, installing Solar Panels and purchasing an Electric Car.
- The top two preferred methods to keep respondents updated about the Council's progress on Climate Action were the Council's website (47%) and Email (45%).

Although, overall, the consultation response was largely supportive of the strategy, each priority and target was revisited following careful consideration of the consultation response and adjusted accordingly. This included strengthening the areas that were clearly important to respondents including Land Use & Biodiversity, Waste and Collaboration and Engagement. The Strategy and Action Plan had been redesigned to reflect this as well as updates to legislation, Greenhouse Gas emissions data etc.

The draft Strategy (Appendix B to the report) and the Action Plan (Appendix C to the report) focused on eight key priorities:

- 1) Dartford Borough Council Organisational Emissions
Focus: The Council aims to reduce its organisational carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030
- 2) Transport
Focus: Support the shift towards cleaner modes of transport and reduce car dependency with co-benefits to air quality and health.
- 3) Built Environment
Focus: Improve the energy efficiency of buildings and support the shift away from fossil fuel powered heating systems to low-carbon technologies.
- 4) Energy Generation
Focus: support the generation of renewable energy across the Borough.
- 5) Waste
Focus: Support the Borough to reduce waste, reuse, recycle, compost and encourage a circular economy.
- 6) Land Use & Biodiversity
Focus: Protect, enhance and increase green space for the benefit of people, wildlife, flood defence and carbon capture.
- 7) Governance and Finance
Focus: Embed climate change in all decision-making and governance at the Council.
- 8) Collaboration & Engagement
Focus: Empower residents, businesses and communities to make informed decisions on climate change and access relevant grants.

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It was intended that Delivery of the action plan, against the targets set, will be monitored by the Council Leadership team with an update presented to Cabinet on an annual basis.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection added that there were a number of details in the report that had been carefully considered to provide the update to Cabinet.

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Natural Environment welcomed the report and the high number of consultation responses.

In reply, the Director of Housing and Public Protection advised that the consultation response rate was proportionally significantly higher than the same consultation exercise that Kent County Council had undertaken.

RESOLVED:

1. That the results of the findings from the public consultation be noted;
2. That the comments in the report be endorsed and that the Director of Housing and Public Protection be granted delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Chairman, to make the relevant changes; and
3. That the draft Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan at Appendix B and C to the report be recommended to the General Assembly of the Council for approval.

63. PROPOSAL FOR RENEWAL OF THE CURRENT DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER 2022- NUISANCE VEHICLES - BOROUGH OF DARTFORD

The Cabinet considered a report which set out a proposal to renew the current Borough Wide Nuisance Vehicle Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) introduced in 2022 for a further three year period with an aim to continue tackling incidents of traffic offences and associated anti-social behaviour occurring principally due to nuisance vehicles across the Borough. It was a legal requirement that PSPO's could not last longer than 3 years but could be extended providing the local authority is satisfied that specified behaviour is having, or is likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality; is persistent or continuing in nature; is unreasonable and justifies the restrictions imposed. Authorities could specify the particular behaviour to be prohibited or restricted by the PSPO.

The current PSPO was implemented in May 2022 after the Community Safety Unit (CSU) and Kent Police had been receiving reports over a prolonged period of vehicles being used in such a manner so as to cause alarm, harassment and distress to other road users and residents whilst they are either at home or using some of the open air amenities available within the

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Borough. Typically, the antisocial behaviour the PSPO sought to reduce manifested itself in one of two ways;

- The gathering of (predominantly) motor cars in car parks and other public places which are then driven on the Borough's arterial-road system in such a manner and at such a volume so as to cause significant alarm, harassment and distress to other road users and nearby residents. This had occurred predominantly in the area of "Crossways Boulevard" but there had been instances of similar behaviour in other locations, the most notable one being the Sainsbury's Car Park in Town Ward.
- Vehicles, predominantly motorcycles that are ridden on land other than a road (such as woods, parks and other open spaces) without the land owner's permission. The vehicles used are often ridden by people under the age of 18, with the bikes not being road legal, emitting excess noise, and driven in a manner that causes alarm, harassment and distress to residents that live nearby or to people using the amenities for other lawful pursuits.

Data presented in the report supported the view that there had been a significant reduction in both types of anti-social behaviour directly as a result of measures under the PSPO.

Before the Council could renew the PSPO it was required to consult with the owners or occupiers of land within the restricted area to the extent that it is reasonably practicable to do. The Authority is also required to consult with the Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and other relevant bodies prior to making the PSPO. Police consultation should be carried out through the Chief Officer for the force responsible for the area, although details could be agreed by working-level leads. This is an opportunity for the Police and Council to share information about the area and the problems being caused as well as discuss the practicalities of enforcement. Kent County Council as highway authority would also need to be consulted. Parishes that are in the proposed area covered by the PSPO must be notified.

The Council was also required to consult with whatever community representatives it deems appropriate and must also publish the draft PSPO in accordance with the legislation. It was proposed to carry out the consultation in accordance with the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy Toolkit. The feedback received from the Consultation would then be collated by the Community Safety Unit and will inform the final recommendations to Cabinet regarding the renewal of the PSPO in early 2025.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection presented the report and in reference to the Cabinet Advisory Panel A minutes of the meeting on 21 October 2024, confirmed that clarification of Kingdom's involvement in the issuing PSPO penalty notices was provided to the Panel.

The Leader of the Council commented on the importance of ensuring that the signage in the Dartford Town Centre was clear on what was permissible and

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what was not. He suggested that there could be a wider review of PSPOs in the future to look at issues such as leafleting and charity canvassing.

In reply, the Director of Housing and Public Protection advised that e-scooters were banned in the town centre. E-bicycles were slightly more difficult to manage, however PSPOs did make enforcement action easier overall. There was not a specific PSPO for leafleting and charity canvassing and more data and evidence was needed. An update on a potential plan in relation to this would be provided at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That on being satisfied that the anti-social behaviour activities detailed in paragraph 3.11 of the report are having, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, are persistent or continuing nature and unreasonable, the Director of Housing and Public Protection be authorised to commence the statutory consultation to enable the Council to renew the current Public Spaces Protection Order prohibiting anti-social behaviour associated with the gathering displaying and racing of motor vehicles as well as driving on land other than a road on terms set out in Appendix A to the report, to apply to the whole of the Council's administrative area, as identified on the Order Map, at Appendix B to the report; and
2. That a second report be presented to Cabinet which takes into account the outcome of the consultation process with a view to seeking authority for the Head of Legal Services to renew the Dartford Borough Council Public Spaces Protection Order – Nuisance Vehicles – Borough of Dartford, for a period of three years.

64. BUS SHELTER CONTRACT - OUTCOME OF TENDER PROCESS FOR A NEW BUS SHELTER CONTRACT

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed the outcome of the new Bus Shelter tender process commenced July 2024. The new contract, which would run for a period of five years from 1st January 2025 with an option to extend for a further five year period, would replace the current interim contract due to finish at the end of December.

The interim contract covered cleaning and maintenance of 65 bus shelters; with the provider being responsible for business rates and electricity; the contract allowed the provider to use the bus shelters for advertisements (subject to separate planning consent). There was no cost to the Council for this service as the cost of maintenance was covered by the income that the current provider, CCUK, receives from advertisements on the bus shelters. The Council did not currently receive any income from this contract and had not done for previous bus shelter maintenance contracts. However with greater potential to raise income through advertising media, with the growing use of digital advertising, the new contract was proposed to be made on a concessionary basis with advertising generating income to

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the Council in terms of both a fixed annual income and a revenue share during the term of the contract.

The new bus shelter contract requires the service provider to be responsible for the cleaning, maintenance and repair of 65 bus shelters in the Borough managed by the Council, and the replacement of bus shelters across the contract period. The provider being responsible for business rates and electricity. The contract allows for the provider to use the bus shelters for advertisements (subject to separate planning consent) and would include the installation of 20 Living Roof bus shelters. The tender required bids to be submitted for two options:

- Option 1 - a bid with a ban on adverts for foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) and
- Option 2 - a bid with no HFSS ban on adverts.

Only one company, the current provide CCUK, submitted a tender, and did so by making offers on two scenarios, a base offer providing for full replacement of the Council's bus shelter estate across the 5 year contract period and an alternative offer which provided for replacement of 20 bus shelters which have reached end of life over the term of the contract with the remaining bus shelters to undergo CCUK 'Revive' project - a process of extending the useful lives for another 10 years and return of savings to DBC through an increased annual fixed fee. It was considered that the base offer would provide the Council with long term benefits as this includes the full replacement of the bus shelter estate for the lifecycle of the contract. The base offers and cost analysis was outlined in Exempt Appendix A to the report. The Cabinet was therefore being asked to award the contract on that basis and the instruct on whether the contract should include a ban on adverts for foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS), or not.

The Director of Growth and Community presented the report and confirmed that CCUK, the current contractor, was the sole organisation to submit a tender. She confirmed that the two options offered by CCUK in respect of advertising at the bus shelters was to whether advertising should include a ban on HFSS or not. She advised that Cabinet Advisory Panel A, at its meeting on 21 October, had expressed a preference for there to be a ban on adverts for HFSS. The re-tender had offered the opportunity to look at replacing all bus shelters with upgrades and to consider a ban on advertisements promoting HFSS products, in order to promote healthy living.

A Member commented that there may be other ways of promoting healthy living as opposed to a total ban on HFSS advertising and asked how HFSS products were categorised.

The Leader of the Council acknowledged that there was a need to promote healthy eating, however an outright ban on HFSS advertising could be reconsidered at a later stage following a review.

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In reply to queries from Members, the Director of Growth and Community advised that classification of HFSS was determined by the Food Standards Agency. She added that banning adverts promoting HFSS products would not be an unusual step as other local authorities were also taking such measures.

The Leader of the Council felt that rather an outright ban on HFSS adverts being agreed at this stage, that CCUK be required to encourage potential advertisers to not include adverts promoting HFSS products, subject to a review after implementation and this suggestion was agreed by Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

1. That the two offer bids submitted by CCUK as set out in Exempt Appendix A to the report, on the two options contained in the specification be noted;
2. That a bus shelter specification requiring CCUK to encourage advertisers to not include adverts for foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS) be adopted and that this subject to further review;
3. That a contract for a period from 1st January 2025 and to 31st December 2029, with the option to extend for a further five years based on the base offer as set out in paragraphs 4.4 and 4.7 of the report be awarded, taking into account decision 2 above.

65. DRAFT HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed changes to the existing Housing and Repairs Maintenance Policy following a review of the policy which had been in place since 2014 and which had last been updated in May 2020. The Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy detailed the Council's approach to the housing repairs and maintenance service provided to Council tenants and leaseholders and the review had been carried out to ensure that the policy was up-to-date and that all relevant information is provided in a clear and easy to read format and that the Council complies with the new Government Safety and Quality Consumer Standard that all registered providers of housing must comply with.

The changes to the draft Policy were detailed in Appendix B to the report and included:

- Changes to the structure to offer improved clarity and order of each section including setting out tenant and landlord repair responsibilities more clearly.
- Updates to ensure that the Policy covers the outcomes and specific expectations within the Safety and Quality Consumer Standard, including the Council's approach to safety compliance.
- The inclusion of new sections on:
 - Relevant legislation, regulation and policy
 - How the Council assists older and disabled tenants through the Older Persons Decoration and Handyman Schemes

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How the Council carries out planned maintenance
How the Council complies with data protection requirements
Clarification on the review frequency of the Policy

The report also described the outcome of a 4 week consultation on the policy with tenants and leaseholders, including consultation with the Dartford Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, and detailed the format of the consultation and the responses received, which were reported in Appendix C to the report. There had been no changes to the policy arising from the consultation.

The draft policy had also been considered by the Housing Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 October 2024 and the Board had endorsed the policy and recommended that it be approved by the Cabinet.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection presented the report and advised that it was an important policy which included proposals bringing in new legislation. There had been extensive consultation with residents, including with the Dartford Tenant and Leaseholder Forum.

The Leader of the Council indicated that he was satisfied with the proposed policy.

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved;
2. That the consultation comments and responses, attached at Appendix C, to the report be noted; and
3. That the Director of Housing and Public Protection be granted delegated authority to approve any minor or legislative in-year amendments to the Policy, as required.

66. DRAFT ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PLAN

The Cabinet considered a new draft Asbestos Management Policy and Plan which sets out a policy, management plan and procedure for managing asbestos. The management plan detailed the approach that will be adopted by the Council with regard to the day to day management of asbestos in the Council housing stock, and any sites or operations which fall under the responsibility of the Housing Service of the Council. The Council is the Duty Holder in Council owned and maintained properties or where the Council is responsible for the maintenance of the property and as such is responsible for asbestos management and must assess the risk of asbestos in their premises. The Council, as Duty Holder, will ensure that the Asbestos Management Plan is implemented and that an asbestos register of all known or suspected asbestos containing materials is kept up-to-date.

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The Council had adopted a pro-active approach to asbestos and its control to ensure the safety of Council employees, contractors, tenants and anyone else who may be affected by the Council's undertakings in this regard. The Council also aimed to prevent any exposure to asbestos as far as reasonably practicable.

The report also described the outcome of a 4 week consultation on the policy with tenants and leaseholders, including consultation with the Dartford Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, and detailed the format of the consultation. There had been no written responses on the policy and plan and no changes arising from the consultation.

The draft policy had also been considered by the Housing Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 October 2024 and the Board had endorsed the policy and recommended that it be approved by the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft Asbestos Management Policy and Plan, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved; and
2. That the Director of Housing and Public Protection be granted delegated authority to approve any minor or legislative in-year amendments to the Policy, as required.

67. DRAFT LEASEHOLDER ARREARS POLICY

The Cabinet considered a proposed new draft Leaseholder Arrears Policy which detailed the Council's approach to preventing and managing leaseholder arrears and to ultimately minimise the level of leaseholder arrears. To achieve this, the Council aimed to:

- Ensure all leaseholders are aware of their responsibility to pay for ground rent, service charges and major works where required;
- Ensure leaseholders have the information and support they need to prevent or minimise their debt;
- Enable leaseholders to maximise their income;
- Monitor levels of arrears and have early intervention mechanisms in place to prevent arrears accruing further;
- Promote and offer a wide variety of payment options;
- Ensure all communications are clear and encourage contact;
- Take appropriate and proportionate action in accordance with the level of arrears accrued;
- Ensure all leaseholders are treated in a fair, respectful, empathetic and consistent way.

Although the policy included an arrears recovery procedure, this would be based on a staged escalation process to recover any debt and all leaseholders in arrears would be treated sensitively by the Council during any action to recover arrears.

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The report also described the outcome of a 4 week consultation on the policy with tenants and leaseholders, including consultation with the Dartford Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, and detailed the format of the consultation and the response received, which was reported in Appendix B to the report. There had been no changes to the policy arising from the consultation.

The draft policy had also been considered by the Housing Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 October 2024 and the Board had endorsed the policy and recommended that it be approved by the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft Leaseholder Arrears Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved;
2. That the consultation comments and responses, attached at Appendix B, to the report, be noted; and
3. That the Director of Housing and Public Protection be granted delegated authority to approve any minor or legislative in-year amendments to the Policy, as required.

68. DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Cabinet considered a new draft Neighbourhood Management Plan which set out the Council's approach to the management and maintenance of its neighbourhoods.

The key objectives of the Neighbourhood Management Policy detailed in the report are to:

- Ensure that all tenants are able to live in a safe and well maintained environment;
- Raise awareness of landlord and tenant responsibilities in the maintenance of homes and the surrounding area;
- Ensure any neighbourhood management issues are resolved as quickly as possible;
- Ensure responsive repairs to blocks and communal areas are carried out as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimise any disruption to residents;
- Encourage resident involvement and offer opportunities to residents to contribute in the maintenance and improvement of neighbourhoods;
- Work in partnership with contractors, local agencies and landlords to ensure neighbourhoods are managed and maintained to a high standard.

The Policy would also meet the Regulator of Social Housing's Neighbourhood and Community Standard, which includes a requirement that registered providers must work co-operatively with tenants, other landlords and relevant

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organisations to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of shared spaces, and the Regulator of Social Housing's Safety and Quality Standard, which includes a requirement that registered providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas.

The report also described the outcome of a four week consultation on the policy with tenants and leaseholders, including consultation with the Dartford Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, and detailed the format of the consultation. There had been no written responses on the policy and no changes to the policy arising from the consultation.

The draft policy had also been considered by the Housing Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 October 2024 and the Board had endorsed the policy and recommended that it be approved by the Cabinet.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection presented the report and confirmed that the policy applied to anyone living in a block and set out the expectations of both tenants, leaseholders and the Council, which included raising the responsibilities of the Council as the landlord. With regards to tenant satisfaction, it was recognised that there was a need to look at the maintenance standards of blocks.

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Housing commented that councillors should be made aware that this policy had been agreed.

Councillor Lloyd referred to the abandoned vehicles section of the report and stated that this often took a long time to resolve. He asked if there was any expectation as to how long it would take to remove abandoned vehicles as it involved both checks undertaken by the Council and the DVLA before action could be taken.

The Leader of the Council also reiterated the need to ensure that councillors were aware of both this policy and the Fire Safety Policy.

In reply, the Director of Housing and Public Protection advised that the requirements of the tenants were in their tenancy agreement and block monitors were in place to report any issues. He stated that there were plans for further communications with residents to set out both the expectations of residents and the Council and that it would be re-emphasised that no personal items should be left in communal areas. He then confirmed some changes to the report following comments, these being:

- Paragraph 12.3, page 233 – After the word DVLA add “(this may take a number of weeks.”
- Paragraph 12.5, page 233 – second sentence to be deleted.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection also undertook to provide Councillor Lloyd with further information in respect of dealing with abandoned vehicles.

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RESOLVED:

1. That the draft Neighbourhood Management Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved; and
2. That the Director of Housing and Public Protection be granted delegated authority to approve any minor or legislative in-year amendments to the Policy, as required.

69. FIRE SAFETY POLICY

The Cabinet considered a proposed draft Fire Safety Policy which detailed how the Council will manage fire safety risk in its building and communal areas and how fire safety will be managed and communicated by the Council. The Policy detailed the roles of Council Officers who have been assigned specific duties and responsibilities, and the robust procedures the Council has in place. The Council's fire safety process includes management of fire protection and safety systems and equipment, plus a pro-active regime of assessment of its properties, known as Fire Risk Assessment (FRA).

The key objectives of the Policy were to:

- Manage the process to ensure that fire risk assessments are completed for every property that meet the requirements of the regulations;
- Maintain an up-to-date record of activity and findings from assessments, including any actions, repairs, changes or improvements;
- Monitor the activity to ensure that any required actions are completed in a timely and appropriate manner;
- Provide effective fire safety information, instruction, and training where appropriate;
- Regularly consult and communicate with residents and employees on fire safety matters; and
- Monitor and review the Council's fire safety systems and prevention measures to ensure their effectiveness.

The report also described the outcome of a 4 week consultation on the policy with tenants and leaseholders, including consultation with the Dartford Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, and detailed the format of the consultation. There had been no written responses on the policy and no changes to the policy arising from the consultation.

The draft policy had also been considered by the Housing Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 October 2024 and the Board had endorsed the policy and recommended that it be approved by the Cabinet.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection advised that in respect of Section 9.1, housekeeping, third bullet point on page 247 of the report, that the word "especially" was to be removed.

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft Fire Safety Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved; and
2. That the Director of Housing and Public Protection be granted delegated authority to approve any minor or legislative in-year amendments to the Policy, as required.

70. DRAFT UNDER OCCUPANCY POLICY

The Cabinet was reminded that the first Under Occupancy Policy (the Downsize for Cash scheme) was approved by Cabinet in October 2007 to encourage tenants with larger properties, that were no longer suitable for their needs, to move to a more suitable property, to ensure the best use of council stock. Changes to the current scheme were being proposed that would assist tenants in downsizing and reduce the risk of rent arrears, whilst ensuring that the housing stock was better utilised in terms of meeting housing need, where a property is under occupied.

The current under Downsize for Cash (DFC) scheme had been reviewed in order to ensure it was fit for purpose and to give further encouragement to tenants who were under-occupying their council property to move to more suitable accommodation that meets their needs and to release family accommodation to maximise occupancy.

The report stated that the total number of council homes currently under-occupied was 452 and that there were 89 single tenants over the age of 75 living in homes with two or more bedrooms. There had been 24 payments made under the current scheme since 2022/2023 and there were currently two live applications for 2024/2025.

A number of changes were proposed to the scheme to make it more attractive, including an increase in the level of payments offered to tenants. The main proposals were:

- a) To elevate the status of the scheme to make it a Policy;
- b) To add new sections including:
 - Introduction
 - Strategic Aims
 - Objectives
- c) Payments proposed to be increased/changed in section 5.1 of the policy document to:
 - £1000 per bedroom released
 - £500 for a parlour room released
 - An additional £500 for those releasing 3 and 4 bed properties
 - An additional £1000 for those transferring to 1 bedroom Scheme Housing
 - An increase in moving costs to £1000
 - An additional £200 to help towards preparing for the move

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- The table in section 5.3. has been updated to reflect the proposed increase in payments. Those releasing a 'parlour' style room would receive less than those releasing a designated bedroom.
- d) New information on payments in Section 8.
- e) Bulky waste removal costs updated in Section 10.
- f) A new section on Budget Limits included in Section 11.

The report also described the outcome of a four week consultation on the policy with tenants and leaseholders, including consultation with the Dartford Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, and detailed the format of the consultation. There had been no responses on the policy and no changes to the policy arising from the consultation.

The draft policy had also been considered by the Housing Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 October 2024 and the Board had endorsed the policy and recommended that it be approved by the Cabinet.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection presented the report which was an update on the current policy. It had been recognised that the current financial incentives had not been sufficient to encourage more residents to downsize and as a result, the financial incentives had been doubled and it was hoped this would have a greater impact. It was also important that the appropriate accommodation was offered to those who may be interested in the DFC scheme, particularly older people.

A Member asked how residents were approached regarding the DFC scheme and were the children of the original occupants involved. Another Member asked if there was a home swapper scheme in place.

The Lead Member for Finance commented that the incentives offered by the DFC scheme may be quite small compared to savings that some residents may have.

In reply, the Director of Housing and Public Protection advised that potential DFC scheme participants were approached and discussions took place with them, and this would include with their children. He added that the children did not have the automatic right of succession to the property, however help would be offered in respect of removal costs. There was a national database for home swapping which was outside of the Council's authority, however the Council could facilitate such moves and there was a Dartford Home Swapper Scheme, not operated by the Council, in place.

RESOLVED:

That the draft Under Occupancy Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved.

71. DRAFT RENT SETTING POLICY FOR COUNCIL HOMES

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed a new draft Rent Setting Policy for Council Homes which set out the Council's approach to rent setting

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across its social and affordable rented homes, within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This included complying with the Regulator of Social Housing's economic Rent Standard which allowed social and affordable rented homes rents to be increased annually by up to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation plus 1%. The Council must ensure that it meets the requirements of the Rent Standard for social rented/affordable rented homes while ensuring affordability for its tenants and maximising income.

The Council was committed to providing rented housing at genuinely affordable rents and the draft policy aimed to provide a clear and consistent framework for setting and reviewing the rents of all properties within the Council's HRA.

The Policy also aimed to ensure that current and future rents are set at levels which:

- Maintain the financial viability of the HRA
- Maintain the existing housing stock
- Construct or acquire new homes
- Allow continual service improvement
- Are fair and affordable for all tenants
- Are compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements

The Policy detailed the Council's approach to rent setting across its stock and provided detailed information on:

- The definitions of low cost rented accommodation, Formula rent, affordable rent and the rent flexibility level
- The purpose and scope of the policy
- The legal and regulatory framework
- The rent policy background
- Setting rents
- How the Policy will be monitored and implemented
- Equality and diversity

The report also described the outcome of a four week consultation on the policy with tenants and leaseholders, including consultation with the Dartford Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, and detailed the format of the consultation. There had been no responses on the policy and no changes to the policy arising from the consultation.

The draft policy had also been considered by the Housing Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 October 2024 and the Board had endorsed the policy and recommended that it be approved by the Cabinet.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection presented the report which set out the rent setting policy transparently. He advised of an amendment to paragraph 7.1, page 288 in the report to read:

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“The legislative responsibility for setting the final rent level for the Council’s social housing lies with the General Assembly of the Council and is set at the annual budget meeting which is held in February each year” and the recommendation should be re-worded accordingly to reflect this.

RESOLVED:

That the draft Rent Setting Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report, be recommended for approval to the General Assembly of the Council at its annual budget meeting.

72. HOUSING SERVICE UPDATE REPORT - QUARTER 1 2024-25

The Cabinet considered a report which provided an update on the work undertaken by the Council’s Housing Service, including performance information for the first quarter of 2024-25. Whilst the report provided updates across the whole Housing Service, particular focus was devoted to the activities of the landlord service in meeting the standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing and the Council’s compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code. It also included summaries of individual Housing Service team’s roles, successes, challenges and focus. The report specifically detailed how the Housing Service has prepared for, or has met, the expectations of the Regulator and Housing Ombudsman and also aims to provide transparency and encourage scrutiny and challenge from a governance perspective on all areas of the service.

The report detailed progress made against the Improvement Plan developed from a self-assessment carried out using the Regulator of Social Housing’s consumer standards and tenant satisfaction measures results from 2023/24 and reported progress on the Tenant Satisfaction Measures for 2024/25 following the completion of the tenant perception survey carried out between 29 July and 15 September 2024, the results of which were currently being analysed.

The update also contained details of complaints handling, against the newly revised Corporate Complaints Policy and Procedure, which now aligned with the timescales contained in the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint handling Code. During the 1st quarter of 2024/25 13 complaints were opened, 11 at Stage 1 of the complaints procedure and 2 at Stage 2. Of the 13 complaints 6 were upheld, 1 partially upheld and 6 were dismissed. 11 of the complaints (84.6%) were dealt with within the policy timescales and 2 (15.4%) were not. The report detailed the nature of the complaints received, the remedies put in place where they were partially or fully upheld and the lessons learnt as a result. Among these was the recruitment of two additional officers to deal with complaints and the intention to create a Housing Complaints Panel to scrutinise complaint handling performance and drive forward a positive culture to complaint handling.

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The report also presented performance monitoring information for the 1st quarter of 2024/25 across all Council housing service areas, along with an update on homelessness and private sector housing services. Finally the report provided a summary of works being carried out to develop or update housing policies and strategies, either as a result of regulatory and legislative requirements or best practice, policy work that was currently in development or under review, and operational updates for each housing service area.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection presented the report and referred to the minutes of the Cabinet Advisory Panel A meeting of 21 October where the item had been drawn down and comments from that meeting for Members to note.

The Cabinet Member for Housing emphasised the importance of documentation, particularly as the Housing Regulator would be inspecting them and transparency was of the most upmost importance. The report was thorough and much was in place, however this was an area that should be looked at on a frequent basis and would be reported to Cabinet regularly.

The Leader of the Council also commented that this would be an area that the Housing Regulator would look at during their inspection. He referred to a recent meeting of the Temple Hill Forum and commented that there had been significant buy-in from tenants who also appreciated the efforts of officers.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection added that it was expected that Cabinet be fully engaged in being provided housing service updates.

RESOLVED:

That the contents in the update report, attached at Appendix A to the report, be noted.

73. PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF FLATS AT LEONARD AVENUE, SWANSCOMBE

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed demolition of four blocks of flats (16 units) at Leonard Avenue, Swanscombe, due to significant structural issues that made them economically unviable to repair. The Council had commissioned an independent review of the structural issues affecting the blocks of flats in 2022, including possible remedial solutions, and this had concluded that the flats were not economically viable to repair, and, given the defects and damage, that it would be cost advantageous to demolish the buildings, rather than repair buildings that had reached the end of their design lives and could also require further expensive structural work in the future. This matter had originally been considered by the Cabinet in September on the assumption that the final resident would have vacated the property by that time and that all of the flats would have been unoccupied. However there had been a delay and one tenant had remained in place. Given that this new information had not been raised at the Cabinet Advisory Panel in September, as the item had not been drawn down for consideration, the Cabinet had

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deferred consideration of this item to its October meeting for decision and the report was now being re-presented again for approval.

This matter had also been discussed at the meeting of the Housing Advisory Board on 18 October 2024.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection presented the report and confirmed that the last tenant remaining had subsequently signed a new tenancy agreement at an alternative site and demolition works would commence once they had moved out.

RESOLVED:

1. That the demolition of flats at Leonard Avenue and associated costs, as set out in the report, be approved;
2. That a further report be presented to Cabinet in due course if alternative options for the demolished sites are proposed; and
3. That the Director of Housing and Public Protection be granted delegated authority to enter into a contract with a contractor to carry out the demolition works.

74. TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLANNING STUDY 2025

Following the adoption of the Local Plan in April 2024 a design vision and a masterplan is to be developed for the 'Central Dartford' area to assist with creating a cohesive town centre which responds to community needs, and to provide additional guidance for new development which will control the quality of development and deliver an attractive public realm. This work will require involvement and input of key stakeholders and landowners, developers, town centre businesses, residents and the wider public using the town centre.

The report outlined the initial analysis work taking place for the Town Centre masterplan study, explained the future steps in the process, and sought the Cabinet's agreement to proceed with external consultation.

The Director of Growth and Community presented the report that set out a route to a design code for the future of Dartford Town Centre. Extensive consultation would be undertaken and the results of this would be reported back to Cabinet in summer 2025 for consideration. The report would set out what all relevant stakeholders, including residents, businesses and the Council, would like to see and there would be more room for creativity.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the report and commented that a more neighbourhood type approach would be taken.

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RESOLVED:

1. That authority be delegated to the Head of Planning Services to proceed with external engagement to inform the production of a “vision” and masterplan for the town centre based on the adopted Dartford Local Plan; and
2. That the engagement results and relevant design work be reported back to Cabinet in early summer 2025.

75. BEACON WOOD COUNTRY PARK CIL

The Cabinet considered a report which provided the context and assessment of a bid for the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding towards improvements to Beacon Wood Country Park situated within Bean parish. The report detailed the amount of CIL receipts received from the Council from development, amounting to £8,269,211 in 2023/24, of which £6,507,731 had been retained to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects within the Borough.

The current CIL bid had been made by Bean Parish Council to deliver enhancements to Beacon Wood Country Park, of which the Parish Council had been the leaseholder since 2011. The total project cost for the proposed enhancements to Beacon Woods Country Park were estimated to be £66,600, which included a 20% contingency to cover the risks associated with the project. The Parish Council was seeking a CIL grant of £54,000 (amounting to 82% of the project cost), with £12,000 being provided by the Friends of Beacon Wood.

The proposed enhancements included:

Improvements to Hardstanding Pathways

Resurfacing and widening of the existing pathways to ensure smooth and safe travel for wheelchair users, prams/buggies and those with other mobility impairments. The improvements will include an extensive drainage system to reduce the likelihood of the paths becoming flooded during Autumn/Winter.

Installation of appropriate signage to aid navigation and safety.

Remedial Work to Stepped Access

Existing steps providing access to the village will be modified or rebuilt, including the installation of handrails, to ensure they are safe and accessible for visitors.

Drainage Work to Lower Woodland Track

Installation of a new drainage system to manage water flow and prevent flooding on a section of the woodland track that has suffered considerable deterioration.

Rebuild of Dipping Platform and Boardwalk

- Existing dipping platform will be completely rebuilt to ensure safety and accessibility for children accessing the lake area.

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- A new boardwalk will be constructed with non-slip surfaces and safety railings to provide safe access to both the dipping platform and the woodland track.

Provision of Interpretation Boards, Way Marking & QR Marker Posts

- Installation of new interpretation boards to provide visitors with insight into the Country Park's history and significance.
- Provision of additional way markers to enhance the experience of exploring the Country Park providing valuable information while making navigation easy. These will also include QR code links to a dedicated Country Park website for further information.

The principal benefits of the proposed enhancements would improve the accessibility of the Country Park to a wider range of users particularly those with impaired mobility. The enhancements would mean that the Country Park would be accessible throughout the year and re-open parts of the park that were currently closed for safety reasons and increased use of the park would promote better health and wellbeing.

The Borough Council had a sufficient level of CIL funding retained to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects within the Borough to cover the bid submitted by Bean PC for the enhancement of Beacon Woods Country Park and it was not anticipated that this funding bid would undermine the delivery of other strategic CIL projects in the Borough likely to come forward over the next five years. Without the support of CIL funding the proposed works would not be implemented and the facilities within the Country Park would suffer further deterioration.

The Leader of the Council asked if the Council could advertise works as funded by the CIL.

In reply, the Director of Growth and Community advised that a request could be made to use the CIL logo.

RESOLVED:

1. That the level of CIL receipts retained by the Council to support the delivery of projects within the Borough as of the end of March 2024 and shown in Appendix A to the report be noted;
2. That a sum of £54,600 of CIL funding from the receipts retained by the Council to support the delivery of strategic projects within the Borough is allocated towards the Beacon Wood Country Park Enhancement project, as described within paragraphs 4.1 to 4.5 and shown in Appendix C, of the report, be agreed; and
3. That the Head of Planning Services explores further discussion with Bean Parish Council regarding the on-going management and maintenance of the Country Park and the potential funding opportunities to meet the costs of this work.

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76. REVENUE MONITORING 2024-25

The Cabinet considered a report which updated Members on financial performance against the 2024/25 budget to date for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

The Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services presented the report and advised that a balanced budget was expected and income investment would offset costs from temporary accommodation.

RESOLVED:

1. That the monitoring update, for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, at Appendix A to the report, be noted; and
2. That key general fund income streams, at Appendix B to the report, be noted.

77. CAPITAL PROGRAMME - MONITORING 2024/2025

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed the progress to date on the schemes in the approved Capital Programme and the latest position on capital resources.

The Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services presented the report which set out the position of the Capital Programme. The report highlighted disposal receipts, but she advised that there were no further large capital receipts on the horizon. This meant that there may be some restrictions on capital expenditure moving forward.

The Lead Member for Finance commented that it was uncertain what the variance would be in respect of the costs of Orchard Theatre works and asked if there was enough in the Capital Programme to cover any additional costs and was there sufficient transparency.

The Leader of the Council commented in respect of the Orchard Theatre that the final figures were not known at this stage and it was important that the appropriate guidelines were in place to ensure good governance and the appropriate reassurances. He emphasised the importance of careful consideration once the final Orchard Theatre report was put before Cabinet and that transparency was key.

In reply, the Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services acknowledged the importance of being as transparent as possible in respect of the Orchard Theatre.

The Director of Housing and Public Protection advised that any additional costs concerning the Orchard Theatre would be scoped and reported to Cabinet for its consideration. With regards to housing, he advised there was an independent cost consultant to monitor this.

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The Director of Growth and Community advised that the Orchard Theatre works were currently within budget. There had been no discussions yet with the theatre about a potential re-opening date.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress made to date on the 2024/25 Capital Programme, and the budget and resources detailed in Appendices A and B to the report, be noted; and
2. That the current position on the Capital Prudential Indicators, as shown in Appendix C to the report, be noted.

78. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2024/2025

The Cabinet considered a report which updated Members on the investment performance of the Council's internally and externally managed funds, to 30 September 2024 and on the Treasury Indicators for the six months, to 30 September 2024.

The Lead Member for Finance commented that the Treasury Management Panel now had full membership and there was more universal agreement on the issues discussed.

RESOLVED:

1. That the investment performance of the Council's funds, be noted; and
2. That the half-year position of the Council's Treasury Indicators, as detailed in the report, be noted.

79. NEW BUS SHELTER CONTRACT TENDER - EXEMPT APPENDIX A (EXEMPT CATEGORY SO 46 (1) (B) ANNEX 1 PARAGRAPH 3)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Appendix A to the main report which detailed bid offers and a cost breakdown for the new Bus Shelter contract.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of Exempt Appendix A to the main report (minute 64 above) be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.17 pm

Councillor J A Kite, MBE
CHAIRMAN

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CABINET
5 December 2024

CONSULTATION ON SOCIAL HOUSING RENTS 2024

1 Summary

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to the Council's proposed response to the Government's consultation on social housing rents.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. That the Council's response on social housing rents, at Appendix A to the report, be approved and submitted to Government by 23 December 2024.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1. The Government's consultation on social housing rents seeks views on a new Direction from the Secretary of State to the Regulator of Social Housing in relation to social housing rent policy. It focuses on the introduction of a new rent policy from 1 April 2026.
- 3.2. The Direction would require the Regulator of Social Housing to set a standard on rent that will apply to Registered Providers of Social Housing, including housing associations and local authorities. The Government will issue a new Direction on a rent standard to the Regulator. Once a Direction is issued this is binding on the Regulator. This new Direction will revoke all previous rent Directions that were issued by the previous government in 2019 and 2023.
- 3.3. The Government are proposing to set a rent policy for social housing that would remain in place for five years from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2031 with the intention of extending this for a further five years. The Government are also seeking to permit social housing rents to increase each year up to CPI plus 1% for both social and affordable rent. This is a cap and registered providers would have flexibility to apply a lower increase or freeze rents if they so wish.
- 3.4. The Government proposals aim to improve the supply and quality of rented social housing and ensure affordability by providing a stable rent policy. The proposed changes to rent policy focus on the limits that would apply to annual rent charges (i.e. how much, if at all, rents should be permitted to increase each year) and not to the calculation of the maximum initial rent that may be charged when a property is let for the first time or subsequently let to a new tenant.
- 3.5. The draft direction and policy statement reflect the proposals set out above and also incorporate some minor and technical changes to rent policy:

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- Clarifying the circumstances in which the rules on initial rent setting apply following a mutual exchange;
- Specifying how registered providers may convert weekly rents to monthly rents, where they wish to charge rent on a monthly basis;
- Stating that, where a tenancy agreement specifies the number of bedrooms a property has, this should be the basis for applying the bedroom weighting in the calculation of formula rent;
- Making clear that registered providers may not at any time charge a rent for a Social Rent property in excess of the rent caps;
- Clarifying how the relative value of a property should be assessed for the purposes of calculating formula rents;
- In relation to fair rents, making clear that the limit on annual rent increases set by our rent policy cannot be exceeded even where the maximum fair rent is increased by more than that amount;
- Allowing registered providers to let homes at Affordable Rent where they have not previously been let at Social Rent, without having to obtain permission to do so;
- Removing the requirement that the rent for Affordable Rent properties should be no lower than formula rent; and
- Amending the definitions of intermediate rent accommodation and temporary social housing, including to reflect the government's intention to abolish Assured Shorthold Tenancies (through the Renters Rights Bill).

3.6. The Government will also be carrying out a consultation exercise on a new Decent Homes Standard in 2025 which they envisage will introduce additional requirements relating to the state of repair of homes, new requirements on damp and mould and new requirements regarding the safety and security of homes.

3.7. The consultation questions and the Council's [draft] response, are set out in Appendix A to the report.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

4.1. This report relates to the Corporate Plan's ambitions to:

- Strive for full compliance with the Regulator for Social Housing's Consumer Standards in delivering good quality homes & services to the tenants that live in the Council's homes
- Provide a high quality and responsive housing service that's built on respect for aspiring and existing tenants.

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5. Financial, Legal and Staffing & other admin implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	Decisions regarding increases in rents will impact on the Council's Housing Revenue Account
Legal Implications	None as a direct result of this report
Public Sector Equality Duty	Not applicable
Climate Impact Assessment	None
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	No specific risks associated with this report
Crime and Disorder duty	None
Staffing Implications	None specifically emanating from this report.

6. Details of Exempt Information Category
Not applicable.

7. Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Consultation Response – CONSULTATION ON SOCIAL HOUSING RENTS

Documents consulted

Date /
File Ref

Report Author

Section and
Directorate

Exempt
Information
Category

Jackie Pye

Housing Services/
Housing & Public
Protection
Directorate

N/A

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APPENDIX A - Rent Policy Consultation – Draft Response

Question number	Question	Draft Response
1	Do you agree with our proposal that the government should set a rent policy that will remain in place for at least the next 5 years, from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2031?	Agreed (whilst noting responses to 2&3)
2	What impact would a longer settlement have, and what alternative length should a settlement be? (e.g. 7 years / 10 years?)	A longer settlement would be helpful as future investment in the HRA is predicated on being able to predict future income flows.
3	Would a rolling settlement of 5 years (where the 6th year is set 5 years in advance) provide additional stability or certainty?	We believe this would provide additional stability for the Council and its tenants but the ability to rely on the certainty would be affected by the electoral cycle.
4	What impact would these alternative lengths of rent settlement have on providers' willingness and ability to invest in new and existing homes?	The increased certainty would help in investment appraisal decisions to the extent that it is credible.
5	Are there rent policy measures that would provide confidence in the stability of our policy in the event of an inflationary spike?	The rent policy could look to build in flexibility to spread the impact of inflationary spikes over a number of years as well as restricting the cap in a single year. This would prevent tenants facing high one-off rises but would enable providers to keep up with increased costs.
6	Are there other steps that the government should take to build confidence in the stability of its rent policy?	Consistency will increase confidence and the government could consider primary legislation making any commitment more difficult to reign back in the future. Whilst we note changing this is possible (and has happened in the past) the legislation would increase confidence to some extent.
7	Do you agree with our proposal that rents	Yes as a cap this gives flexibility and stability to tenants. However, it may be

	should be permitted to increase by up to CPI+1% per annum?	sensible for the cumulative cap to be considered over a two to three year period which would give more local control and enable Council's to be more sensitive to economic circumstances.
8	What do you consider would be the impact of our proposed rent policy on affordability for rent payers and the willingness and ability of registered providers to invest in new and existing homes over the next 5 years?	Social rents are still considerably lower than private rents in general. It is our view that the formula rent should reflect the real changes in the economy including periods when inflation is high or low, which will also, in the longer term, enable registered providers the ability to properly fund and invest in their housing services.
9	Do you have views on other measures, outside rent policy, that could help to rebuild registered providers' capacity to invest in new and existing homes?	An increase in grant levels administered by Homes England to enable more affordable housing to be built. Housing associations could be given more opportunities to engage with government to identify specific barriers to affordable housing delivery, especially in relation to s106 planning agreements. Increased confidence/awareness in the future direction of the Homes England affordable homes programme post 2026 will enable housing providers to better plan for the future. Feedback from some providers indicates a reluctance to purchase flatted units via s106 with some also scaling back considerably on their development programmes, citing financial pressures as an obstacle to delivery. Sufficient funding being made available for the proposed changes to the Decent Homes programme.
10	Do you have any comments on the detail of the draft direction and policy statement that are not covered by your responses to the previous questions?	No

CABINET
5 DECEMBER 2024

DRAFT LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN FOR GILBERT CLOSE NEW BUILD
COUNCIL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report presents a draft Local Lettings Plan for the Council's new build housing development at Gilbert Close, Swanscombe, Dartford.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. That the draft Local Lettings Plan attached at Appendix A to the report be approved.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1. Planning permission for the development at Gilbert Close was granted in 2020. The development is due for completion in February/March 2025; providing a total of 16 new homes for rent for local people.
- 3.2. Development of the site was considerably delayed by significant archaeological investigations which are now complete and construction of the homes is nearing completion.
- 3.3. Cabinet approved local lettings plans for all of its previous new build development schemes. The draft plan at Appendix A is very similar to the previous versions.
- 3.4. Local lettings plans aim to ensure that the Council's core objectives are met in terms of sustainable development and the minimisation of anti-social behaviour on estates.
- 3.5. The draft Local Lettings Plan sets out the reasons for implementing a plan, the allocation process, and the target household compositions who will receive priority. It also contains additional tenancy conditions.
- 3.6. In summary, the draft Local Lettings Plan aims to give priority to tenants living in the Swanscombe and Greenhithe areas, who have an identified housing need, and who either wish to transfer from their existing property because they are overcrowded or because they wish to downsize.
- 3.7. Tenants will be required to fulfil certain criteria before they are allocated one of these properties including having a clear rent account and no history of anti-social behaviour. Tenants will also have to agree to abide by certain additional conditions as part of their tenancy, such as paying rent by direct debit, agreeing to regular housing officer visits and to register on the electoral roll.
- 3.8. It is anticipated that the implementation of this draft Local Lettings Plan will minimise the risk of management issues on the development and surrounding area.

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4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

4.1. This report relates to the Corporate Plan's ambitions to:

- Strive for full compliance with the Regulator for Social Housing's Consumer Standards in delivering good quality homes & services to the tenants that live in the Council's homes
- Provide a high quality and responsive housing service that's built on respect for aspiring and existing tenants.

5. Financial, legal, staffing & other administrative implications & risk assessments:

Financial Implications	None as a direct result of the report.
Legal Implications	Section 166A(6)(b) of the Housing Act 1996 enables housing authorities to allocate particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories, provided that overall the authority is able to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of section 166A(3) (reasonable preference). This is the statutory basis for so-called 'local lettings policies' which may be used to achieve a wide variety of housing management and policy objectives. Acting on the recommendation is within the Council's powers as set out in the above statutory provisions.
Public Sector Equality Duty	No adverse impact on any particular group as identified in an initial screening. The Council's housing Service, in developing policy/strategy and services, must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure that no individual is discriminated against based on their sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, race, religion, belief, disability or age. In accordance with the Council's Equality and Diversity Framework, the Housing Service will undertake Customer Access Reviews to assess the equality impact of its housing policies and strategies, which are published on the Council's website at https://www.dartford.gov.uk/equality-diversity/customer-access-reviews
Crime and Disorder Duty	As per risk assessment below.

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Staffing Implications	None as a direct result of the report.
Admin Implications	None as a direct result of the report.
Risk Assessment	There is a risk that not implementing a local lettings plan on the Council's new development sites will have a negative impact in the long term, if there is not a sustainable mix of tenants to support balanced communities.

7. Appendices
Appendix A – Draft Local Lettings Plan for Gilbert Close.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
		Jackie Pye X3683	Housing Services, Housing and Public Protection	N/A

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APPENDIX A

**Local Lettings Plan for the Housing
Development at Gilbert Close, in
Swanscombe, Dartford.**

Registered Addresses:

**1-16 Carreck Close
Swanscombe
Kent
DA10 0FJ**

1. Introduction

A choice based lettings scheme based on priority bands currently operates in Dartford. This means that households in greatest housing need are most likely to be successful in securing affordable housing for rent when it becomes available.

The development of a local lettings plan for the Council's new build affordable housing for rent on the Gilbert Close development aims to establish balanced and sustainable communities that are integrated successfully in the existing area.

The Council's new development have been thoughtfully designed utilising excellent materials and making the most use of space; emphasising the quality and sustainability of the development and its high specification. As such, the properties are highly desirable and ideal for established tenants who can demonstrate their good tenancy record; with priority being given to those who are downsizing and those with growing families. This in turn will free up much needed family properties for those on the Council's housing register.

The power to develop local lettings plans is set out in S166A of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), which allows local authorities to establish local lettings plans to enable them to allocate accommodation to people of a particular category in order to achieve a housing policy objective. The ability to develop local lettings plans was reinforced in the Government's 'Fair and Flexible Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England, published in December 2009.

2. The Development

There are 16 units on the development comprising of:

- 4 x 1 bedroom flats
- 10 x 2 bedroom flats
- 2 x 3 bedroom houses

3. Household composition

Households will be allocated properties that meet their housing need. Under no circumstances will properties be allocated to households that will under-occupy or over-occupy the property.

The ages of children may also be considered to ensure an appropriate mix of younger and older children to encourage positive socialising and behaviour on the development. Family make up may also be taken into account and properties may be offered to both couples, and single parent families, and households from mixed income sources.

It should be noted that no aids or adaptations can be made due to the restraints put in place during the property defects liability period (12 months from completion of construction).

4. Allocations Process

The Council will allocate properties in accordance with its policies and procedures, this Local Lettings Plan and Choice Based Lettings, and will monitor this Local Lettings Plan to ensure it remains viable. The details and conditions set out in this Local Lettings Plan will be included on the property advert when advertised on Kent Homechoice.

Although the Council will mainly advertise the properties via Kent Homechoice, direct offers could be made to applicants in some circumstances. Priority will be given to Dartford Borough Council tenants who are:

- Living in the Swanscombe or Greenhithe areas
- Downsizing from a property that is too large for their needs;
- Overcrowded in their current accommodation or they need to move for significant medical or management reasons (whether or not this means moving to a larger or smaller property).

Allocations will **not** be made to any applicant(s) who:

- Do not have a clear rent account at point of offer and a well-managed rent account for at least the preceding 12 months
- Have an outstanding debt in respect of former tenant arrears, Council Tax or sundry debts
- Do not have a high standard of tenancy conduct with no proven issues surrounding anti-social behaviour for themselves, members of their household, or their visitors for which they are responsible
- Have tenancy breaches, nuisance or reported control issues in relation to household pets
- Have not maintained their existing accommodation to a high standard with no defects or damage (*a check will be carried out to assess the current condition of the property*)
- Do not agree to a fully verified household composition check which must match the details on the corresponding housing register application
- Do not agree to participate in an affordability check to ensure the new tenancy is sustainable and appropriate to household income.

However, the Council will look at all cases individually and where there are extenuating circumstances, which would lead to unfairness or inequality, the above criteria may be relaxed.

5. Tenancy Conditions

Tenants must agree to the following before the allocation of a tenancy; in addition to the conditions set out in the tenancy agreement:

- To pay rent regularly and on time by direct debit only

- To allow access to a housing officer to visit on a 6 weekly basis for the first six months (to be booked in advance at sign up of tenancy) and at reasonable times thereafter.
- To allow access for contractors to inspect the property for any defects (this is usually one year after the completion of the build).
- To maintain the property's fixtures and fittings in good order; in accordance with the prescribed list of fixtures
- To ensure that the outside of the property is kept in good order, e.g. window cleaning on a regular basis (*communal window cleaning will remain the Council's responsibility*)
- To maintain all private gardens in good order
- To keep all communal areas free from any obstruction or clutter at all times and ensure that refuse is disposed of in a proper manner and in accordance with collection times
- To park in marked parking bays only
- Not to carry out any property alterations
- Not to keep pets without the Council's permission which must be obtained prior to any allocation and in accordance with the Council's Policy on Keeping Pets (included in new tenancy packs)
- To register on the Electoral Register within 3 months of tenancy commencement
- To sign a declaration to agree the above tenancy conditions prior to tenancy commencement.

In addition to the above, tenants will not be allowed to mutually exchange or apply for a transfer to another property until they have tenanted the property for at least one year.

6. Relets

The same conditions, as set out in this Local Lettings Plan, will apply to all relets, except the prioritisation of Swanscombe and Greenhithe tenants.

Scheme Name: Gilbert Close

Registered Address:

Tenant(s) names

.....

I/we agree to abide by the above Local Lettings Plan.

Signature one.....

Signature two.....

Date:

DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT

We will collect and use your personal information to administer our Local Lettings Plan process.

Our **lawful bases** for processing your personal information are:

- our relevant legal obligations under the Housing Act 1996
- necessary for the performance of a task in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in us under the above legislation

Some of the information we collect is classified as **special category personal data**. This is processed for reasons of substantial public interest as set out in the legislation referred to above. We have a Data Protection Policy that sets out how this information will be handled.

Dartford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent DA1 1DR is the Data Controller dataprotection@dartford.gov.uk

Please refer to our [Corporate Privacy Notice](#) and the Privacy Notice for [Housing Services \(Landlord and Tenant\)](#) for further details of how we process your personal information and your rights.

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COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY: ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out an update of the potential infrastructure projects that could be supported by funding secured through the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) within the context of the level of CIL funding received by the Council up to September 2024. The report also sets out the progress that has been made over the past year on the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects as identified in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Programme. The report also references the progress that has been made regarding the CIL funding retained by the Council for the unparished areas of the Borough, which is the subject of separate reports to Cabinet.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the CIL income received by the Council, as set out in **Appendix A** to this report, including the level of CIL funding retained to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects, be noted.
- 2.2 That the projects identified in Part 2 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and covered in paragraphs 5.3 to 5.6 of this report be noted as the current strategic infrastructure projects identified as potentially requiring the allocation of CIL funding.
- 2.3 That the revised and updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan, as set out in **Appendix B** to this report, be approved for publication and form the basis for ongoing liaison with the relevant infrastructure providers on the further development and delivery of the identified schemes and inform consideration of decisions on the allocation of CIL funding.
- 2.4 That, once individual projects are sufficiently progressed to demonstrate they are deliverable, further reports be submitted to Cabinet, for decisions on the release of CIL funding contributions towards those projects.
- 2.5 That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning Services to publish the Infrastructure Funding Statement incorporating the CIL income shown in Appendix A to this report and the updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan shown in Appendix B to this report, in accordance with Regulation 121A of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) ("the CIL Regulations").

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1 The Council adopted a CIL Charging Scheme which came into effect on 1st April 2014. Governance arrangements for CIL were approved by Cabinet on 9th March 2017 (Minute No.124) and revised arrangement, taking into account changes to the CIL Regulations, approved by Cabinet on 22nd September 2022 (Minute No.49). In accordance with the governance arrangements, a report has been presented to Cabinet on an annual basis providing an update on CIL income and its expenditure including an update of the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

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- 3.2 Cabinet also approved governance arrangements for the CIL funding retained by the Council for the unparished areas of the Borough on 26th May 2022 (Minute No.11). The allocation of CIL funding for a pilot programme of projects in the unparished area was approved by Cabinet on 26th January 2023 (Minute No.88). Further details of the Unparished CIL Programmes are discussed in paragraphs 6.4 to 6.5 of this report and are the subject of separate reports to Cabinet.
- 3.3 The governance arrangements for CIL provide transparency and give infrastructure delivery bodies some certainty regarding the availability of CIL funding and the priorities that the Council gives towards infrastructure provision. The Council works with the infrastructure delivery bodies to facilitate the development of their schemes and the securing of other sources of funding to ensure its timely delivery.

4. CIL Income for 2022/23 and 2023/24

- 4.1 For the financial period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024, the Council received a total of £8.269m in developer contributions through the application of its CIL Charging Scheme, a rise of 7.7% over the previous financial year. For the first six months of the current financial year (2024/25) a further £3.118m of CIL income has been received.
- 4.2 Under the CIL Regulations, the Council is allowed to retain up to 5% of the CIL receipts to cover administrative costs associated with the collection and management of CIL funds. For 2023/24, this would amount to £413,500 but the Council only retained £152,870 (1.85%) for this purpose with the remainder being retained to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects. The CIL retained for administrative purposes in 2024/25 will be determined at the end of the financial year.
- 4.3 CIL Regulations require the Council to transfer a proportion of the CIL receipts from development within the town and parish council's areas to those local councils. A similar proportion of the CIL receipts from development within the unparished areas of the Borough is retained by the Council to spend on infrastructure that would improve the unparished areas. This "Neighbourhood Portion" is discussed further in paragraphs 6.1 to 6.6 of this report.
- 4.4 Taking into account the Neighbourhood Portion and the CIL receipts used to cover administrative costs, the CIL income in 2023/24 that has been retained to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects across the Borough amounts to £6.508m. For the current financial year, up to the end of September 2024, a further £2.539m could also be retained to support the delivery strategic infrastructure projects subject to confirmation of CIL funding retained for administrative costs. Further details of the CIL income received, transferred and retained by the Council can be found in **Appendix A**.
- 4.5 Whilst future CIL receipts cannot be estimated with a high degree of certainty, based on the CIL Liability Notices issued to developers on sites that have already commenced there are potential receipts of £3.197m due to be received for the remainder of this financial year giving an estimated out-turn for 2024/25 of around £6.315m. Beyond the current financial year

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it is more difficult to forecast CIL receipts as the number of larger development sites with planning permission is diminishing and it is difficult to predict when new sites will be coming forward. Appendix A includes a forecast estimate of the total CIL receipts that could be received over the next five years of around £19.65m. This is based on a conservative annual estimate of around £3.18m combined with payments due from development sites that have commenced, or are expected to commence, with the next five years. The EDC is committed to delivering the planned development at Ebbsfleet Central and there is a resolution to grant permission subject to the completion of a s106 Agreement. For this reason Ebbsfleet Central has not been included in the estimate of forecast CIL receipts. Appendix A shows that over the next five years CIL receipts are expected to decline from the peak reached in 2023/24 reflecting the fact that the a number of major development sites have commenced in recent years and further major sites are yet to come forward.

5. Potential CIL Funded Projects

- 5.1 The Council must apply CIL to funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of its area. Such infrastructure is identified in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This is a "living document" regularly reviewed through on-going engagement with key infrastructure providers. The IDP has replaced the requirement for the Council to produce a 123 List and is now the principal document through which the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects are monitored and issues relating to their delivery, including any potential funding gaps, can be highlighted.
- 5.2 The latest updated version of the IDP is shown in Appendix B to this report with infrastructure projects divided into three categories:

Part 1 – Fully Funded Projects

In general these projects have no call on CIL funding being either legacy projects related to historic agreements completed under section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (attached to specific planning permissions requiring infrastructure implementation) that largely pre-date the adoption of CIL or funded through separate programmes of the relevant infrastructure provider.

Part 3 – Projects to be Further Defined

This section includes projects that have been identified but require further work to determine their costs, timescales for delivery and any critical dependencies that need to be overcome. This section also includes broader strategies that are likely to be a source of future potential projects

- 5.3 Part 2 of the IDP provides the focus for projects that the Council has identified as potentially requiring the allocation of CIL funding to support their delivery. Projects included in this section are also expected to be delivered within the next five years. It is recognised that further actions may be needed to provide certainty that these project can be delivered including the level of any potential CIL funding forming part of the overall

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funding package for the project. Any final decision on the allocation of CIL funding will be made by Cabinet with the bid submitted having been subjected to an assessment against the Council's CIL assessment criteria.

- 5.4 The revised governance arrangements approved in September 2022, established a process for the identification of infrastructure projects and the allocation of CIL funding. The first stage involves the submission of an Expressions of Interest which should provide sufficient detail to determine the projects eligibility for CIL funding. An eligible project that is expected to be delivered within the next five years is then included within Part 2 of the IDP. The Council is currently aware of the following eligible projects:

Greenhithe Medical Centre

Fleetdown Utd FC

Dartford Grammar School for Boys (Extension)

Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy Expansion

Ebbsfleet Green PS Expansion

Darenth Valley Hospital ITU

A226 London Road Sustainable Transport Corridor

- 5.5 The list of projects currently identified in Part 2 of the IDP does not preclude further projects being added being added as the year progresses subject to a valid Expression of Interest being submitted. For the allocation of CIL funding towards a project a more detailed Bid Pro-Forma will need to be submitted. At present where this Bid Pro-Forma has not been received an indicative scale of potential CIL for each project is shown. Projects identified within Part 2 of the IDP must be within the existing level of CIL funding retained by the Council to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects and include the likely projected income over the next five years.

- 5.6 Part 2 of the IDP also currently shows the following projects that have been allocated CIL funding and reports on their progress:

Dartford Town Centre Regeneration Project (£4.152m allocation)

Stone Recreation Ground (£3.8m allocation)

Beacon Wood Country Park (£54,600 allocation)

- 5.7 It is not envisaged that CIL will fund projects in full and infrastructure delivery partners are encouraged to seek other sources of funding. This ensures that the CIL funding retained by the Council to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure is used in the most effective way and allow for its use to facilitate more strategic infrastructure. For all projects that meet the eligibility and prioritisation criteria the allocation of CIL funding will be determined through a specific report to Cabinet.

6. CIL Neighbourhood Portion

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Parish/town council areas

- 6.1 During 2023/24, a total of £1,266,625 of CIL receipts was transferred to town and parish councils within the Borough. For the six months from April to September 2024 a further £477,177 was transferred. These figures break down across to town and parish councils as shown below:

Local Council	CIL Receipts Transferred	
	2023/24	Apr-Sept 2024
Souhfleet PC	£11,585	£0
Stone PC	£1,076,117	£477,177
Swanscombe & Greenhithe TC	£175,343	£0
Wilmington PC	£3,580	£0
Totals	£1,266,625	£477,177

In total, since the adoption of the Council's CIL Charging Scheme in 2014, the total CIL receipts transferred to town and parish councils within the Borough amounts to £3.411m up to the end of September 2024.

- 6.2 Under the CIL Regulations the proportion of CIL receipts transferred to town and parish councils from development within their area is 15% which increases to 25% where a Neighbourhood Development Plan is in place. Only Stone Parish Council has an adopted Neighbourhood having been made (adopted) by the Council at the Cabinet meeting on 21st July 2022 (Minute No.32). Development approved after this date which has a CIL liability will yield 25% of the CIL receipts to the parish council once the development has commenced and CIL payments become due.
- 6.3 CIL Regulations require the town and parish councils to publish details of the CIL income they receive for each financial year that CIL receipts are transferred to them and how they have used this income to support development of their area. It is also suggested that the town and parish councils work closely with the Council to agree spending priorities. Further liaison will be carried out with the town and parish councils to identify opportunities where the CIL income they receive can be combined with the CIL funding retained by the Council to meet shared priorities.

Un-parished areas

- 6.4 A significant part of the urban area of the Borough is unparished and, in line with the CIL Regulations, the Council retains 15% of the CIL receipts it receives from development within this area to support the delivery of infrastructure projects that would support the development of the area. In 2023/24 a total of £341,984 of CIL receipts were retained by the Council for the unparished areas together with an additional £102,002 for the April to September 2024 period. Since the adoption of CIL in 2014 a total of £3.491m has been retained.
- 6.5 On 26th January 2023, Cabinet approved the allocation of £500,000 to six projects that formed the Unparished CIL Pilot Programme (Minute No.88). The allocation of CIL funding for this pilot programme anticipated that the projects would be delivered before the end of the 2023/24 financial year

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but in the event expenditure has extended into 2024/5. A further Unparished CIL Programme for 2024/25 was allocated £320,800 of CIL funding by Cabinet on 23rd May 2024 (Minute No.7) consisting of the following four projects.

Unparished CIL Programme for 2024/25			
Project	Project Cost	CIL Allocation	
Dartford Mental Health Hub	£642,300	37%	
	to £267,300	to	
	£715,500	42%	
Dartford Methodist Church	£141,500	£30,000	21%
Christ Church Community Project	£28,000	£19,500	70%
Chatsworth Road Parking Restrictions	£4,000	£4,000	100%
Total CIL Allocation		£320,800	

Further programmes are anticipated and will be the subject of separate reports to Cabinet for the allocation of CIL funding from the CIL receipts retained by the Council for the unparished areas of the Borough. Such reports will also provide more detailed information on the progress of the projects allocated funding through previous programmes.

- 6.6 On the 24th February 2024, Cabinet approved the allocation of CIL funding (Minute No.106) from the CIL receipts retained for the unparished areas of the Borough towards the following two projects.

Dartford Town Centre Parking Study – work continues to identify appropriate solutions to the parking pressures on residential streets in and around the town centre. Work on Zone 1 (West Hill) has reached the stage where implementation is expected in 2025/26. Progress on the other Zones is advancing and updates are the subject of separate reports to Cabinet.

Community Development Worker – the post has recently been filled and in due course this new member of staff will be able to help support organisations submitting bids for the Unparished CIL programmes and, if allocated CIL funding, monitoring their progress.

7. Relationship to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 The subject of the report supports the Dartford Corporate Plan 2024-2027 Strategic Aims of:

Housing by supporting the delivery of infrastructure such as schools, medical facilities, transport improvements and green spaces to meet the needs generated by new housing development.

Traffic & Transport by supporting the delivery of a range of upgrades to the transport network including more sustainable and reliable public transport and expansion of the Active Travel (cycling and walking) network providing viable alternatives to the use of the private car.

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Public Health by supporting the improvement of healthcare facilities across the Borough that reduce health inequalities and improving health outcomes for the people of Dartford.

Environment by encouraging the delivery of infrastructure that supports a shift towards cleaner modes of transport and protects and enhances green spaces, particularly for the Borough's Green Grid Network.

People & Communities by supporting the delivery of new or the enhancement of existing community facilities that promote social interaction, help community groups and minimise the need to travel.

The maintenance of an effective Community Infrastructure Levy collection system and the update annually of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan are set out as key actions within the Corporate Plan.

8. Financial, legal, staffing and other implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	This report does not recommended infrastructure projects for the approval of CIL funding. Nett CIL receipts (less the Neighbourhood Portion and administration costs) will be retained by the Council for strategic infrastructure projects until such time as Cabinet approves the allocation of CIL funding to specific projects. The proposals contained within the report will ensure that spending on local infrastructure projects will not exceed the monies collected through the Council's CIL Charging Scheme, or the combined funding where a project has multiple funding sources. The administrative costs associated with the collection, allocation and monitoring of CIL receipts will be covered through the proportion of CIL receipts the Council is allowed to retain.
Legal Implications	The use of CIL monies is defined by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) ("the CIL Regulations"). Regulation 121A requires the Council to publish an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement by 31st December. The Statement must confirm developer contributions received and spent for the previous financial year along with any contributions held by the Council with an indication of what these funds will be used for. Regulation 61 of the Regulations allows charging authorities to retain up to 5% of the CIL receipts to cover administrative costs.

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	Acting on the recommendations is within the Council's powers as set out in the above statutory provisions.
Public Sector Equality Duty	There are no specific Public Sector Equality Duty or Crime & Disorder Duty implications arising from the report.
Crime & Disorder Duty	These duties will be further assessed for individual infrastructure projects as they come forward.
Climate Change Impact Assessment	The proposals contained within the report do not directly have an impact on climate change. Further assessment of individual projects submitted for the allocation of CIL funding to support their delivery will have their own impact assessments on climate change.
Staffing Implications Administrative Implications	The administration of CIL covering the collection, spending and governance is carried out within existing staff resources. There is provision within CIL Regulations for up to 5% of CIL receipts to be used for administrative purposes. This provision is being utilised. Resource requirements for proposals within this report predominantly relate to the on-going consultation to identify projects for further rounds of the Unparished CIL Programme and the monitoring of CIL funds allocated to individual projects.
Risk Assessment	The risk of overspend on individual projects will be borne by the service/infrastructure provider delivering the project and this will be covered through legal agreements entered into for each project where CIL funding has been allocated. The delivery of individual projects could also be delayed for a number of reasons unrelated to the allocation of CIL funding. The identification of infrastructure projects within the IDP that require CIL funding to support their delivery will be determined, in part, on the ability of the project to be delivered within the next five years and the existing and forecast level of CIL funding retained by the Council for strategic infrastructure projects. Risks associated with individual projects will form part of the further assessment process before the allocation of any CIL funding is approved. The initial pilot programme of projects for the unparished areas of the Borough was capped at £500,000 limiting the level of expenditure. The

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	subsequent 24/25 programme resulted in an allocation of £320,800. The £500,000 cap will be maintained for further programmes as an aid to assessing the benefits of individual projects and their prioritisation. Allocations of CIL funding for further Unparished CIL Programme will be separately approved by Cabinet.
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9. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable

10. Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of CIL Income & Expenditure

Appendix B: Dartford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, December 2024

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
CIL Regulations 2010 (SI 2010 No.948) (as amended)		Stephen Dukes (01322) 343015	Planning Services, Growth & Community Directorate	N/A

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Community Infrastructure Levy: Annual Monitoring 2024

APPENDIX A

Report on Dartford CIL Income

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a mechanism that allows local planning authorities to raise funds from new development in the form of a levy. Dartford Borough Council adopted a CIL Charging Schedule which came into force in April 2014. Funds raised are pooled primarily to support the delivery of larger strategic infrastructure required to support development within an area rather than to mitigate the impacts of a specific site.

Table 1 below shows an overall summary of the CIL payments received by the Council during the periods 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 and 1 April to 30 September 2024. The table also shows the CIL receipts transferred to local councils; those retained to be spent in unparished areas; the portion applied to administrative expenses and the portion retained for strategic infrastructure. A summary of the total CIL receipts since the adoption of CIL in 2014 and the current total of CIL receipts retained for strategic infrastructure is also provided.

Table 1: Summary of Dartford CIL Receipts

Period	1 Apr 2023 to 31 Mar 2024	1 April to 30 Sept 2024
Total CIL receipts	£8,269,211	£3,117,801
CIL receipts transferred to town and parish councils	£1,266,625	£477,177
CIL receipts retained to be spent in local unparished areas	£341,984	£102,002
CIL Receipts Applied to Administrative Expenses 5.0%	£413,461	£155,890
Actual ⁽¹⁾	£152,871	<i>To be confirmed</i>
CIL Allocated	£0	£0
CIL retained to be spent on strategic infrastructure projects.	£6,507,731	£2,538,622 ⁽²⁾
Cumulative Totals since 1 April 2014		
Total CIL receipts	£40,375,239	£43,493,039
Total CIL receipts transferred to town and parish councils	£2,933,606	£3,410,783
Total CIL receipts retained for the local unparished areas	£3,490,908	£3,593,594
Total CIL receipts applied to administrative expenses	£749,467	<i>To be confirmed</i>
Total CIL Funding Allocated to Strategic Projects ⁽³⁾	£8,045,791	£8,045,791
Total CIL available to support strategic infrastructure.	£25,155,467	£27,693,404⁽²⁾
Notes:		
1. The CIL Regulations allow authorities to retain up to 5% for administrative expenses. Where this amount is not fully utilised the remaining CIL receipts are added to the funding retained to support strategic infrastructure projects. 2. Subject to confirmation of CIL receipts applied to administrative expenses which will not be available until the end of the 2024/25 financial year. 3. Expenditure of £93,791 was incurred over the 20/21 to 22/23 period, £4.152m was allocated to Dartford Town Centre Regeneration Project in October 2021 and up to £3.8m was allocated to Stone Recreation Ground in September 2023. This does not include the £54,600 allocated to Beacon Wood Country Park in October 2024.		

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Community Infrastructure Levy: Annual Monitoring 2024

APPENDIX A

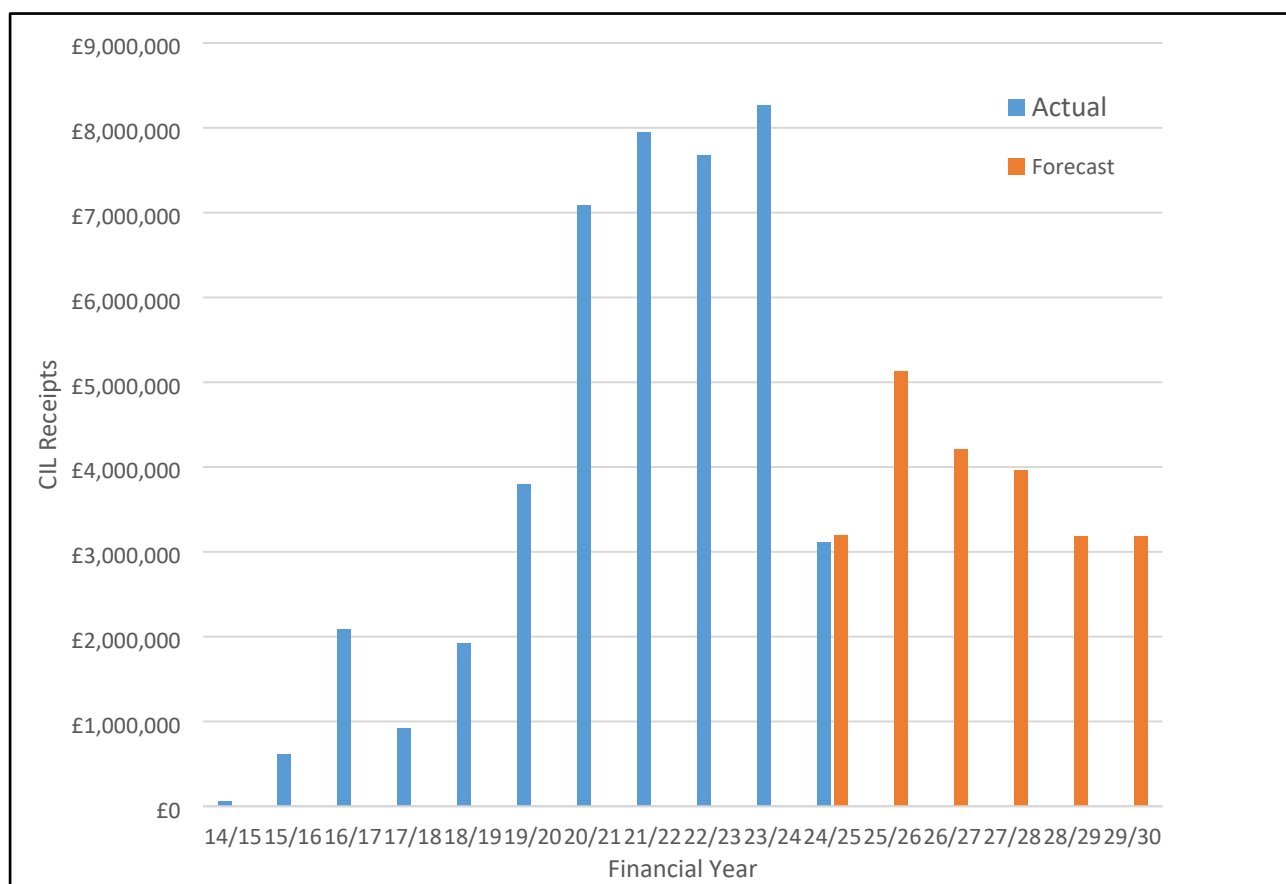
It is not intended that CIL receipts retained for strategic infrastructure projects will fully fund the projects identified. Nonetheless there is the necessity to pool funding over a number of years to secure sufficient funding to support the implementation of the current identified schemes. It is also the nature of larger strategic infrastructure projects that there is a long lead-in time to delivery and costs are significant.

The Council has approved governance arrangements for the allocation of CIL funding that takes into account the availability of other funding sources, the certainty of delivery and an assessment of each project to defined criteria. The Council works in liaison with its infrastructure delivery partners to bring forward strategic infrastructure that meets the demands generated by development within the Borough.

Actual & Forecast CIL Income

The actual and forecast CIL receipts since the adoption of Dartford's CIL Charging Scheme and extending to cover the next five years is shown in Figure 1 below. The CIL income for 2023/24 is higher than the previous financial year and, at over £8m, is the highest annual CIL receipts the Council has received. This reflects the continued instalments from larger development sites that have commenced over the last 3-4 years and the more recent commencement at the St James Lane Pit development site (Knights Reach).

Figure 1: Actual & Forecast CIL Receipts 2014/15 to 2029/30



CABINET**5 December 2023**

Community Infrastructure Levy: Annual Monitoring 2024

APPENDIX A

For the current financial year (2024/25) CIL receipts of £3,117,801 have already as shown in Table 1 above. Based on the monitoring of CIL payments due from development that has already commenced a further £3,197,141 are expected for the remainder of this financial year. This gives an estimated out-turn for CIL receipts of £6,314,941 for the 24/25 financial year. This would be a reduction in CIL receipts compared to the period 2021/22 to 2023/24 and reflects the fact that many of the larger sites are nearing completion.

The total CIL receipts over the period 2014/15 to 2024/25 would amount to £46,690,181 which over this 11 year period, averages to £4.245m per annum. In view of the more recent high levels of CIL income that have been achieved a more conservative estimate of £3.183m has been assumed for the forecast CIL receipts over the five-year period from 2025/26 to 2029/30.

Whilst future CIL receipts cannot be estimated with a high level of certainty based on CIL liability notices issued to developers that have yet to commence a rough estimate can be made of the CIL income from these developments. When these are combined with the annual average income a general decline in CIL receipts is estimated over the next five years. It should be noted that the forecast CIL receipts for the next five years does not take into account any planning permissions for major development sites that are currently awaiting determination or similar sites that may come forward for planning permission.

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This report provides the latest update of the strategic infrastructure projects identified to support the delivery of planned development within the Borough. The report includes infrastructure that has been completed; infrastructure to be delivered that is fully funded; infrastructure to be delivered and supported with CIL funding and infrastructure where further details are needed regarding its future delivery.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2024

Update December
2024

DARTFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Introduction

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge that can be applied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool to help local authorities deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area. CIL can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure¹ including roads and other transport infrastructure; flood defences; schools and other educational facilities; medical facilities; sporting and recreational facilities and open space. Dartford Borough Council (the Council) adopted its CIL Charging Scheme which came into effect on 1st April 2014. Dartford's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) forms part of the governance arrangements for CIL, approved by the Council in March 2017 and further revised in September 2022, replacing the previous infrastructure list required under CIL Regulation 123 ("the 123 List") when this regulation was deleted².

This updated IDP provides details of the latest infrastructure projects identified by the Council through engagement with the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) and key infrastructure providers including Kent County Council (KCC), Dartford Gravesham & Swanley Health & Care Partnership (DGSHP), Environment Agency (EA), National Highways (NH) and Network Rail (NR). The infrastructure projects support planned new development in the Borough and help meet the new demands this planned growth will generate. This IDP supersedes that published in December 2023 and provides the latest information on the progress and delivery of key infrastructure projects. The IDP is a "living document" and is subject to change at least annually as new development takes place across the Borough and delivery partners identify the need for new infrastructure projects in response to the demands created.

The infrastructure projects contained in this IDP have been categorised under the following three headings and reflects the progress being made towards their delivery, the cost of the projects where known and the funding status:

1) Projects where the full level of funding has been identified (including direct provision by developers).

These projects have been judged by the Council or its delivery partners to be either fully funded/delivered through existing s106 obligations and/or other external funding sources.

2) Projects where the application of CIL funding would help to unlock the delivery.

This section of the IDP is divided into two parts.

Part (a) list those infrastructure projects that have already been allocated CIL funding and provides a summary of their progress.

Part (b) list those projects that have been identified through ongoing liaison with delivery partners where it is considered that CIL funding has the potential to unlock their delivery over the next five years. It is recognised that further actions may be needed to provide certainty that these projects can be delivered including any potential for CIL forming part of the overall funding package. The projects in this category form the principal focus for the allocation of CIL funding from the CIL receipts retained by the Council to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure projects. At this stage with a formal bid to be submitted an indicative scale of potential CIL funding is given for each project. Any final decisions on the allocation of CIL funding will be subject to an assessment against Dartford's CIL Assessment Criteria and approval by the Council's Cabinet.

¹For the definition of infrastructure see s216(2) of the Planning Act 2008 and CIL Regulation 59 (as amended by SI 2012/2975 and SI 2013/982)

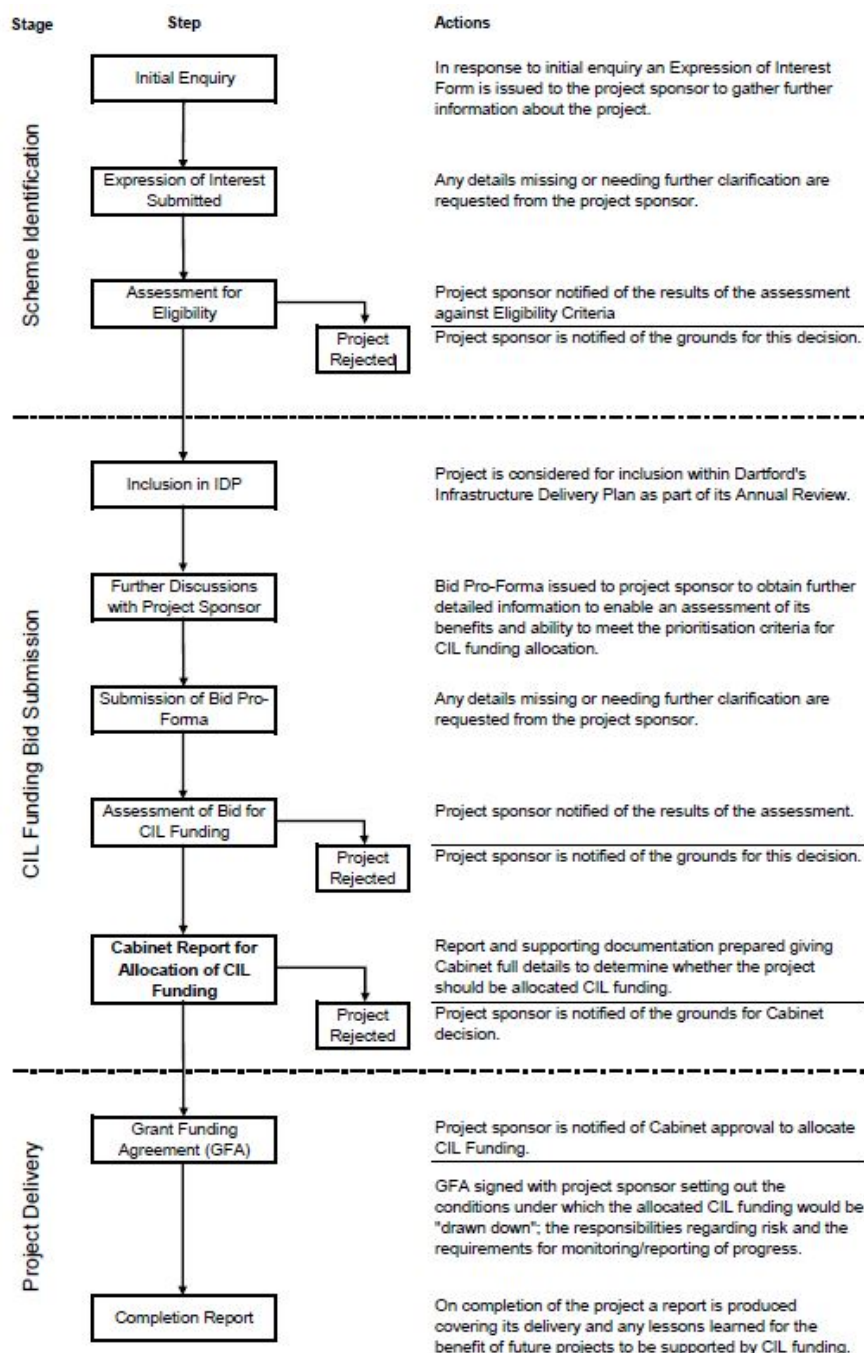
² See Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019 No.1103)

3) Projects that may be needed to support development but currently need to be further defined in terms of delivery timescale, which may be beyond the next five years, and potential funding.

This section covers additional projects that are emerging but which have not yet been clearly defined and strategies that are expected to identify infrastructure projects. The specifics of the projects such as need, delivery and timing, clarity of funding sources, and whether CIL funding would help to unlock delivery all require further consideration. The Borough Council will continue to work with the relevant delivery partners to further develop these projects/strategies and identify funding opportunities to enable delivery.

The revised governance arrangements for Dartford's CIL Charging Scheme approved in September 2022, established a process for the identification of infrastructure projects and the allocation of CIL funding (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Procedure for Identification of Projects and Allocation of CIL Funding



The first stage in this process requires the submission of an Expression of Interest which should provide sufficient details of a project to determine its eligibility for CIL funding. An eligible project that is expected to be delivered within the next five years is then included within Part 2. For the allocation of CIL funding towards a project a more detailed Bid Pro-Forma is submitted. As projects are identified for inclusion within Part 2 the principle will be maintained that there will need to be sufficient CIL funding already retained or funding will be available within the estimated forecast CIL receipts for the next five years.

The IDP addresses strategic infrastructure, whereas the small proportion of CIL funds reserved for local neighbourhood projects are addressed separately by parish/town councils or the Dartford Unparished CIL Fund arrangements.

Projects Completed Since November 2012

The following projects that were featured in previous versions of Dartford's infrastructure Delivery Plan have been completed.

Location	Project	Delivery Agent	Funding Source(s)	When	Cost
Dartford Town Centre	Pool refurbished and health and poolside facilities expanded at Fairfield Leisure Centre	DBC	DBC	Opened 2016	tbc
Castle Hill, Ebbsfleet Garden City	New 2FE Primary School (Cherry Orchard Primary Academy))	Developer	s106	Opened Sept 2017	£7.0m
Castle Hill, Ebbsfleet Garden City	New Community Centre	Developer	s106	Opened 2017	tbc
Stone/Greenhithe	Improvement of A226 London Road/St Clements Way Jnc.	KCC	LGF, s106	Completed 2019	£8.5m
Ebbsfleet Garden City	Springhead Bridge	EDC	EDC	Completed 2020	tbc
Dartford Northern Gateway	New 2FE Primary School on Central Road, Dartford (Rivermill)	ESFA	ESFA, s106	Opened Sept 2020	£7.0m
Dartford Town Centre	Dartford TC Regeneration Project Phase 1	DBC	Homes England, LGF	Completed December 2020	£6.7m
Borough-wide	Fastrack AZ (New Fastrack service between Gravesend and Dartford principally serving Amazon development but available for use by the public)	Developer	s106	Operational August 2021	tbc
Ebbsfleet Garden City	New 2FE primary school at Ebbsfleet.	KCC	s106, KCC	Opened Sept 2021 (as a 1FE) 1FE Expansion in 2022/23	£10m
Stone	8FE Secondary School (Stone Lodge)	ESFA	ESFA, s106	April 2022	£32m
A2 Bean & Ebbsfleet Junctions	Major improvement of junctions to improve capacity and ease congestion in response to planned development in the area.	NH	NH, EDC, s106	Opened to traffic June 2022	£112m
Dartford Town Centre	Dartford TC Regeneration Project Phase 1a (High Street) public realm improvements.	DBC	DBC, s106,	Summer 2022	£2.6m
A282 (M25) junction 1a	Implementation of a short-term improvement involving the widening of the westbound carriageway of the A206 where it crosses the A282.	NH	s106	March 2023	£1.2m
Urban Traffic Management & Control (UTMC)	Upgrade of traffic signals to provide integrated/responsive traffic control systems. To minimise delay/congestion for all vehicles and support the smooth	KCC	EDC, s106	May 2024	£4.2m

	running of buses, particularly Fastrack.				
Dartford Town Centre	Dartford TC Regeneration Project Phase 2a (Lowfield Street/Instone Road) public realm improvements.	DBC	DBC, s106, CIL	Completed 2024	tbc

Specific projects are identified in this IDP which means that this does not include the identification of other potential development funding requirements for items such as additional library book stock, youth outreach programmes, community learning services and police, and other emergency services, resources. The Council will continue to discuss the appropriate resource requirements needed to support development and, where possible, agree funding mechanisms for these and other types of social/community infrastructure. This may be through a combination of CIL, s106 and third party funding and will depend on the geographic coverage of the service requirement and the ability to meet need generated by development.

The IDP also does not cover any mitigation associated with the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC). Whilst this Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project is outside the Borough it could potentially have a significant impact on traffic movements through the Borough on both the strategic and local road network. National Highways has submitted its application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) and the project is awaiting the secretary of State's decision. As part of the DCO process the scope for improvements outside the limit of the scheme itself that may be needed to mitigate its wider impacts will be determined. These improvements will then be delivered as part of the scheme or through designated funds.

Further updates of the IDP are expected to be published, at least on an annual basis, to coincide with the Council's consideration of Dartford's Annual CIL Monitoring.

1. Fully Funded Projects

	Location	Project	Description & Need	Lead Delivery Agent	Funding Source(s)	Delivery Issues/Comments	When
Green infrastructure	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Green Corridors Phase 3	Series of improvements to public rights of way within and adjacent to Ebbsfleet Garden City to provide a cohesive network linking pedestrian and cycling infrastructure provided as part of development with the wider network giving access to key locations outside the Garden City.	KCC	EDC	Works started in 2021. The following schemes are being progressed within Dartford: Site 3a – Greenhithe Station (completed) Site 3b – London Road to Greenhithe Station (scheme currently paused) Site 4 – Ebbsfleet Academy (completion due Autumn 2025) Site 5 – Bean Road (completed)	2025/26
	Dartford, East Hill	Livingstone Hospital Community Diagnostics Centre (CDC)	Provision of additional capacity for diagnostic services that are more easily accessible to the local community. The CDC would relieve pressure on Darent Valley Hospital allowing areas to be re-purposed.	DGSHCP	NHS	The proposal for Livingstone Hospital CDC has been developed in response to a Government initiative. The CTC would provide: Imaging (X-ray, CT, MRI, Ultrasound) Physiological measurements Pathology Government funding for the CDC was confirmed earlier this year. The interim facility is fully up and running with all planned services in operation. Planning permission for the permanent CDC facility has been approved and the contract has been awarded. Demolition of the derelict buildings on the site has been completed and the ground works are underway. The modular units are in construction with the supplier and the project remains on track for completion and opening of the permanent facility by Spring 2025	Temporary provision 2024/25 New CDC 2025/26

Abbreviations

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Transport	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Whitecliffe Fastrack Route	Provision of a dedicated route through the Whitecliffe (Eastern Quarry) development site supporting the expansion of the Fastrack network and provide opportunities for more sustainable transport journeys.	Developer	s106	Route through Castle Hill and Alkerden has been constructed and Fastrack is currently serving these developments. The final section through Ashmere is under construction and a route for Fastrack services through Whitecliffe will utilise Hedge Place Roundabout towards the end of 2025 whilst awaiting the completion of the tunnels under Bean Road.	2025/26
Education	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Alkerden 8FE Secondary School	Phased opening of new secondary school on Whitecliffe (Eastern Quarry) development site to meet demand generated by Ebbsfleet Garden City and potential demand from outside the Garden City area.	Developer	s106	Planning permission for and Education Campus at Alkerden was granted in November 2021. This will comprise an 8FE non-selective secondary school, a 2FE primary school, dual use sports pitches and sports hall for use by the school and local community. Aletheia Anglican Communities Trust has been selected to operate the primary and secondary schools as an “all through school”. Design is completed and construction to provide temporary provision for the secondary school is in progress whilst the permanent school is being constructed.	Sept 2025 (Temporary 5FE for Year 7) Sept 2026 (Permanent 5FE) 8FE by 2027/28 1 FE by 2026/27 2FE by 2027/28
Education	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Alkerden 2FE Primary School	Phased opening of new primary school on Whitecliffe (Eastern Quarry) development site to meet demand generated by development within the Ebbsfleet Garden City.	Developer	s106		
Transport	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Whitecliffe - Bluewater Tunnels	Tunnels constructed under B255 Bean Road linking Bluewater with Whitecliffe (Eastern Quarry) providing dedicated Fastrack and pedestrian/cycle routes through Whitecliffe and onward to Ebbsfleet International Station. Project supports expansion of Fastrack network and more sustainable transport provision.	KCC	DfT, EDC	KCC is working on the delivery of the tunnels. Issues relating to the presence of Thames Water assets under Bean Road and a general increase in construction costs have impacted on the timescale for delivery. KCC is working with the EDC on resolving these issues and the submission of a Full Business Case to secure funding. In the interim Fastrack services will be routed via Hedge Place Roundabout in November 2025 with the tunnel connection to Bluewater to follow.	2026/27
Education	Borough-wide	Provision of a Special School (SEND)	The need for an additional 250 places for Profound, Severe & Complex Needs has been identified in KCC's Commissioning Plan for	KCC	KCC, ESFA	Provision would cover demand from North Kent covering Dartford, Swanley and Gravesham supplementing existing provision at Milestone Academy, New Ash Green and The Ifield School, Gravesham.	2026/27

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Community			Education Provision in Kent as existing provision in Swanley and Gravesham has already exceeded their capacity.			A site has been identified within the Swanley/Hextable area of Sevenoaks District for the provision of a new school providing 250 places that would address a geographical gap in provision across the wider North Kent. KCC submitted a bid to the Department for Education in July 2023 and funding for the new school was confirmed by Government on 23 August 2023. DfE is progressing work on the design of the school and the submission of a planning application.	
	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Alkerden Community Hub	Provision of a community facility incorporating library, community learning, youth, social care and other community services to meet demand arising from new development in Ebbsfleet Garden City.	EDC, Developer	EDC, s106	The EDC is looking at the delivery of this facility within the broader context of community services across the Garden City and long-term stewardship arrangements. Planning permission was granted by the EDC for this new community facility on 31 October 2024. Construction is expected to commence in 2025 and scheduled to open to the public in 2027. The Community Hub is identified within the Area Masterplan for Alkerden.	2026/27
	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Ashmere 2FE Primary School	Phased opening of new primary school on Whitecliffe (Eastern Quarry) development site to meet demand generated by development within the Ebbsfleet Garden City.	Developer	s106	Delivery of this new primary school will be determined by KCC and the developer, in conjunction with the EDC, in line with the progress of the housing delivery on the Whitecliffe development site and the triggers set out in the s106 Agreement. A site has been identified in the Area Masterplan for Ashmere and is to be delivered by the developer with KCC securing the school operator.	Within period 2028-2031
Education	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Ebbsfleet Central Health & Wellbeing Hub	Provision of a health facility incorporating primary care provision, a diagnostics centre and other health & wellbeing services to meet demand arising from new development in Ebbsfleet Garden City.	EDC, Developer	EDC, NHS	Planning application submitted for mixed-use development at Ebbsfleet Central East in September 2022. The application allows for up to 35,000m ² of floor space for healthcare facilities/services. The EDC has on-going discussions with DGSHCP and other healthcare providers to	Within period 2029-2034

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Transport			The provision of diagnostic testing could help reduce pressure on existing hospitals.			determine the facilities to be encompassed within this Hub. DGSHCP is focused on the provision of a primary care health centre of at least 984m ² floor space. Other facilities within the Hub could include other healthcare/wellbeing services, education/research and related commercial space such as pharmacy, opticians, etc. The outline planning application commits to the delivery of the Health & Wellbeing Hub which is currently identified within Phase 1 of the Ebbsfleet Central East development.	
	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Ebbsfleet Central Fastrack	Provision of a dedicated routes between Whitecliffe (Eastern Quarry) development site and Ebbsfleet International Station serving Ebbsfleet Central development. Route would support the expansion of the Fastrack network and provide opportunities for more sustainable transport journeys.	EDC	s106	A route for Fastrack is identified on the Masterplan for Ebbsfleet Central East the subject of the planning application to be determined by the EDC. This additional Fastrack infrastructure is expected to be delivered by the EDC.	Within period 2029-2034
	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Ebbsfleet Central 2FE Primary School	To meet demand for school places generated by longer term growth and planned development in the Garden City.	KCC, Developer	EDC, Developer	Planning application submitted for mixed-use development at Ebbsfleet Central East in September 2022. The planning statement submitted in support of this application acknowledges that the provision of a new 2FE primary school could be delivered within the boundary of the application unless an alternative off-site location is agreed by all parties.	Within period 2031-2035

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2. Projects with the Potential to be Unlocked by CIL

a) Projects Allocated CIL Funding

Transport/Public Realm	Location	Project	Need	Lead Delivery Agent	Additional Funding	Delivery Issues/Progress/Comments	Cost	CIL Allocation
	Dartford Town Centre	Dartford TC Regeneration Project Phases 2a, 2b, 3, 3a, 4 and 5	Measures to transform the town centres highway and public realm to support its regeneration, improve access (particularly for non-motorised users), reduce severance and support sustainable travel to encourage modal shift.	DBC	HE Grant (£7.7m) LGF (£4.3m) s106 (£1.611m)	CIL allocation approved by Cabinet in October 2021. Phasing of project will see: Phase 1 – Market Street/Market Place (completed) Phase 1a – High Street (completed) Phase 2a – Lowfield Street/Instone Road (completed) Phase 2b – West Hill/Highfield Road Junction and Spital Street. Contract awarded with works starting on 26 September 2024. Completion scheduled for mid-March 2025. Scheme incorporates improvement of adjacent Essex Road Toucan funded through Unparished CIL Pilot Programme. Phase 3a – Hythe Street. Currently on hold subject to development coming forward on the adjacent former Co-Op site. Design completed but a review may be needed. Phase 4 – Westgate Road/Hythe Street/Home Gardens/Kent Road. Concept designs completed and subject to review. Further traffic modelling is ongoing with update from consultants awaited. Consideration is being given to extending the scheme north to Victoria Road/Mill Pond Road roundabout to improve pedestrian/cycle links with new development north of the railway line. Phase 5 – Home Gardens/East Hill/Overy Liberty. Traffic modelling has indicated that works at this junction could have significant	£18.761m	£4.152m

Indicative Funding Levels:

< £1m	
£1m - £2.5m	
£2.5m - £5m	
>£5m	

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					impacts on traffic congestion in the town centre. Improvements may be limited to traffic signal timings utilising the funding allocated to UTMC project. Junction and other improvements to Home Gardens are being considered as a stand-alone project subject to feasibility and additional funding.		
Stone	Stone Recreation Ground	Upgrade of existing recreation ground to enhance existing facilities and improve the natural environment and accessibility particularly for those with impaired mobility. Increased opportunities for a wider range of activities to meet the needs of a growing community.	Stone PC	Stone PC (£650,000) Urban Tree Challenge Fund (£29,730)	Planning consent for the improvement of the recreation ground was granted in March 2022. The key elements of the proposed works being: • Improved landscaping creating community orchards, nature trail and new footpaths / cycleways, • A new cafe/community hub with Changing Places facilities, • A new and enlarged multi-use games area (MUGA), • Better seating, sheltered areas and picnic areas, • Improved security, lighting, boundary fencing and access points. CIL allocation approved by Cabinet in September 2023 a proportion of the CIL funding to be reimbursed from future CIL receipts transferred to the parish council. Contractor appointed by Stone PC and Grant Funding Agreement completed in April 2024. Works commenced in May 2024 with completion scheduled for March 2026.	£4.475m	up to £3.8m

Indicative Funding Levels:

< £1m	
£1m - £2.5m	
£2.5m - £5m	
>£5m	

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Green Infrastructure

Bean Parish	Beacon Wood Country Park	Project will involve several specific improvements to enhance accessibility and safety in the area, focusing on the needs of disabled individuals, wheelchair users, and families with prams and buggies. The aim is to maintain a valuable asset that is part of the Council's Green Grid Network and increase its use by making it accessible throughout the year. The planned works to include: - Improvements to hardstanding pathways. - Remedial work to stepped access. - Drainage work to the Lower Woodland Track. - Rebuild of the Dipping Platform and Boardwalk. - New interpretation boards, way markers and QR marker posts	Bean PC	Friends of Beacon Wood (£12,000)	Initial enquiry received regarding the suitability of the project for CIL funding and an Expression of Interest supplied. Site visit arranged and an Expression of Interest submitted on 15 July 2024. Project was assessed and further information requested regarding the wider strategic benefits of the project, management of risks associated with the project and its longer term sustainability. CIL allocation approved by Cabinet on 24 October 2024 and, subject to the completion and issuing of a Grant Funding Letter, the work can be started immediately with completion of works expected within 2-3 months.	£66,600	£54,600
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b) Projects Identified as Potentially Requiring CIL Funding

Location	Project	Need	Lead Delivery Agent	Additional Funding Source(s)	Delivery Issues/Comments	When	Cost	Indicative CIL Allocation
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Indicative Funding Levels:

< £1m	
£1m - £2.5m	
£2.5m - £5m	
>£5m	

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Health	Stone/Greenhithe	Greenhithe Medical Centre	Provision of a new healthcare centre to replace existing GP facilities in the area to allow additional services to be provided and meet rising demand from both existing communities and new development.	DGSHCP, Developer	NHS	Agreement reached with KCC regarding the transfer of land at Steele Ave in Greenhithe for the provision of this new health facility. And a specialist developer has been appointed to deliver. Planning permission was granted on 25 May 2024. Discussions with the GP practices that are planned to move into the new facility have been concluded. District Valuer has audited the project and the Kent & Medway ICB has approved the project. DGSHCP is in the process of preparing a Business Case to NHS. Bid Pro-Forma to submit for the allocation CIL funding on 11 November 2024.	2025/26	£8.2m (TBC)	
	Dartford West	Fleetdown Utd FC	Proposal is to increase the size of the current enclosed 3G playing surface, upgrade the playing surface itself, reconfigure the grass pitches and improve the changing facilities to make them suitable for use by females and those with mobility issues. The larger 3G pitch and other improved facilities would allow: the club to grow its offering to the wider community including demand for girls football;	Fleetdown Utd FC	Football Foundation, Veolia, Local Businesses, Fund raising activities	An Expression of Interest was submitted on 21 July 2023 and a Bid Pro-Forma has been supplied which is in the process of being completed. It is expected that this will be submitted in the new year. Project has the backing the Football Foundation who have access to funding from the Football Association. They would be the main funder and a decision by their Board is scheduled for April 2025. The proposal requires planning permission and a planning application is likely to be consulted on by the end of 2024.	2025/26	£1.85m (TBC)	

Indicative Funding Levels:

< £1m	
£1m - £2.5m	
£2.5m - £5m	
>£5m	

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Education			• transition youth teams to adult football on site; • free up space to provide opportunities for community use.						
	Dartford West	Dartford Grammar School Expansion	Expansion of existing secondary school as part of plans to upgrade the facilities at the school through the provision of larger classrooms and non-teaching spaces. The plans would also provide an additional 75 places (0.5FE) across all year groups helping to alleviate some of the pressure on demand for selective school provision across the Borough.	Dartford Grammar KCC	KCC (£3.0m) School (£2.2m)	Expansion has been identified within the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent. Architects and builders will be appointed by school who will also seek the required planning permission. A planning application has yet to be submitted.	2026/27	£7.0m (tbc)	
Education	Dartford	Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy	Expansion of existing secondary school from 8FE to 10FE with the creation of a new standalone sixth form block freeing up space within the main building of the school. Demand for secondary school places in Dartford remains very high and this project will help to mitigate this demand by increasing the provision at the school from 1200 places to 1500.	KCC	KCC	An Expression of Interest was submitted on 31 October 2024 for this project. KCC has already provided funding of £425,000 for initial alterations to the existing school building and sports areas. A further £925,000 was allocated to undertake feasibility studies and design work for this project. A planning application is to be submitted by the Leigh Academy Trust.	2026/27	£10.9m	

Indicative Funding Levels:

< £1m	
£1m - £2.5m	
£2.5m - £5m	
>£5m	

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Education	Ebbsfleet Garden City	Ebbsfleet Green Primary School	Expansion of existing primary school by 1FE from its current capacity for 420 pupils (2FE) to 630 pupils. The project is to meet the demand for primary school places in the Ebbsfleet area of Dartford which remains high. The project will involve two separate expansions to the school providing the additional 7 classrooms.	KCC	KCC	An Expression of Interest was submitted on 31 October 2024 for this project. A planning application is schedule for submission in April 2025. This will be determined by Ebbsfleet Development Corporation. Funding by KCC is to be agreed through their statutory democratic processes of KCC Children, Young People & Education Cabinet meeting and subsequent Cabinet Member decision in 2025.	2026/27	£5.458m	
	Borough-wide	Darenth Valley Hospital Intensive Therapy Unit (ITU)	Provision of a new Intensive Therapy Unit (ITU) to meet rising demand with the Trust already being in a position where demand outweighs capacity. The Trust serves an area wider than Dartford Borough alone. The proposal is for a modular 15-bed unit to be constructed that would that would improve ITU capacity and free up space within the hospital. The increased number of ITU beds would allow the admission of patients that would benefit from increased post-operative observation and management contributing to a reduction in morbidity and mortality.	D&G NHS Trust	NHS	Prior to Covid, the Trust was in the process of reviewing ITU requirements in respect of the existing 10-bed unit and the need for its refurbishment. Original architect plans were drawn up in 2022. The issue, proposed project and possibility of CIL funding support was raised at the Leaders Advisory Group on 23 October 2023. An Expression of Interest was submitted on 5 June 2024 and after considering this the project was determined as Eligible and a more detailed Bid Pro-Forma supplied. A full business case has been completed and approved by D&GNHS Trust and the Kent & Medway Integrated Care Board. This business case has been submitted to NHS England for consideration but current NHS capital	2026/27	£25m (tbc)	

Indicative Funding Levels:

< £1m	
£1m - £2.5m	
£2.5m - £5m	
>£5m	

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Transport/Active Travel		The additional beds would also provide greater flexibility for the hospital in terms of surge-capacity should the need to respond to a further pandemic arise.			constraints mean that there is no identified funding source at this time. It is uncertain if development contributions have been sought from other local authorities/organisations in the Trust's area which would benefit from this project. A planning application for the proposal has yet to be submitted and the appointment of a contractor needs to be confirmed.			
	Stone/Greenhithe	A226 London Road Sustainable Transport Corridor	Improved bus priority and active travel infrastructure along the A226 London Road between Watling Street and A206/St Clements Way to improve safety and encourage local journeys by more sustainable forms of travel reducing reliance on private car.	KCC	KCC	Dartford's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan was adopted by the Council in July 2023. In analysing the network corridors and routes the section of the A226 London Road between Cotton Lane and Horns Cross scored the highest and enabled Dartford BC to successfully apply for funding from KCC to carry out a feasibility study to identify improvements to walking and cycling provision along this route. A first public consultation including on concept design, and the principals for improved active travel that influenced this, was approved by Cabinet on 26 September 2024. This consultation is due to close on 20 December 2024.	2027/28	£5m (tbc)

Indicative Funding Levels:

< £1m	
£1m - £2.5m	
£2.5m - £5m	
>£5m	

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3. Further Projects to be Defined and Strategies Generating Future Infrastructure Projects

a) Projects to be Defined Through Ongoing Feasibility Work

	Project/Strategy	Need	Lead Delivery Agent(s)	Potential Funding Source(s)	Delivery Issues/Comments
Transport/Active Travel	A282 (M25) junction 1a	Long-term improvement of junction and approach to Dartford tunnels to overcome congestion on A282 and meet demand from development sites coming forward. Congestion on this strategic route has significant implications on adjacent road network including A206 Bob Dunn Way, A225 Princes Road and routes through Dartford town centre (A226/A2026).	NH, KCC	NH (RIS), s106, CIL	Conflict between local traffic crossing the A282 Dartford Approach Road and strategic traffic seeking access/egress with it. A Steering Group involving DBC, KCC, NH and LB Bexley has been formed to guide work on identifying a long-term solution to the problems associated with this junction. Consultants were appointed in December 2021 to carry out a feasibility study of potential options to relieve the congestion. Traffic modelling is taking place with traffic surveys having been carried out. The study is scheduled to be completed in March 2025. KCC is managing the feasibility study work, with input from partners, funded by s106 developer contributions. Depending on the outcome of the Stage 2 Study, the aim is to put forward an improvement scheme that could be considered for future funding such as the National Highways Road Investment Strategy or other funding opportunities available at the time.
Active Travel	River Darent Bridge	The footbridge across the river Darent (at Station Approach) is a timber bridge and does not offer step free access to the western bank. The bridge is heavily used by residents accessing the station on a daily basis.	DBC	KCC, CIL, Network Rail	Part of the land, where the proposed footbridge ramps are likely to be constructed, is owned by Network Rail, if the new access is provided on a slightly different alignment. Initial communication has taken place with no objections raised, but before delivery a basic asset protection agreement will have to be signed. Some funding is available from s106 contributions from nearby developments but, as the feasibility study is still underway, it is unknown whether this will cover the whole costs of the proposal.

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Health	Alkerden Health Hub	To provide additional capacity for acute and primary healthcare provision for the additional population occupying new housing. Provide benefits for patients and the public including easier access to appointments, reduced waiting times and less congestion at Darent Valley Hospital by bringing services closer to where people live and work.	DGSHCP	NHS	The provision of a new health facility within Whitecliffe (formerly Eastern Quarry) is a requirement of the s106 Agreement. Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust is considering options to move some of its outpatient services from Darent Valley Hospital to the proposed Alkerden Health Hub making it more accessible and efficient to everyone. D&G NHS Trust will be involving patients and the public in the development of these plans. Space within the Alkerden Health Hub will be available on a “flexible” basis for use by other health services. This may include the broader services provided as part of Primary Care Network’s Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (PCN ARRS) teams or other services that form part of integrated neighbourhood teams. These enhance the capacity of general practice (GP) services with a wider range of healthcare professionals. Discussions between NHS, developer and EDC are on-going regarding delivery the delivery of this project with continued NHS involvement being subject to approvals on affordability for the local NHS Trust.
	Sport/Leisure	Central Park Athletics Pavilion	Outline business case for either the refurbishment of the existing pavilion or its demolition and replacement with a new pavilion. The Athletic Club, which has a lease on the land and manages the day-to-day activities, has record numbers of members but the pavilion is deteriorating and the facilities it provides no longer meet the needs of the club. The existing pavilion prevents further growth of the Athletics Club and lacks sufficient storage, changing facilities and space for community activities	Central Park Athletics Club	DBC Specific project needs to be more clearly defined before a submission for CIL funding can be made. Work has been progressing on this with the various users of the pavilion coming together to discuss the needs for the new/refurbished pavilion. Planning permission would be needed and the submission of a planning application is awaited. Confirmation is also needed regarding the availability of funding and clarification provided on the elements identified within the outline business case that can’t be funded through CIL.

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Community	3 rd Dartford Scouts Group	Redevelopment of existing scout hall (Lutonia Hall) to offer further opportunities for young people and families.	3 rd Dartford Scout Group	Scout Group	Demolition of the existing building and its replacement require planning permission and an application has yet to be submitted. Limited level of other funding currently available. Some items identified within overall cost that would not be covered by CIL. Potential to be explored of adjacent Dartford District Scout Council building and open land between this and Lutonia Hall. Further discussions with 3 rd Dartford Scout Group to clarify project and funding.
	Orchard Theatre	Major works are being carried out to the theatre to remove RAAC and reinstate a new roof system. These works presented the opportunity to improve access and facilities for those with mobility issues through: - the installation of lift allowing disabled access to all floors; - the installation of disabled toilets at the upper level front of house; and - installation of disabled seating at balcony level of the auditorium.	DBC	DBC	Legal Opinion required on whether the use of CIL funding for improvements to a building owned by DBC but operated by a private concern would be classed as State Aid (now Subsidy Control). An outline of the costs associated with the items identified for improved disabled access has been produced but these need to be in a form such as an Expression of Interest to be able to determine if a CIL bid would be Eligible. Further discussions needed to define project, costs, other sources of funding and timescales before a bid for CIL funding can be submitted.

b) Strategies Generating Future Infrastructure Projects

Project/Strategy	Need	Lead Delivery Agent(s)	Potential Funding Source(s)	Delivery Issues/Comments
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Active Travel	Active Travel Measures (Dartford's Local Cycling & Walking Improvement Plan - LCWIP)	To create a coherent network of safe cycle and pedestrian routes across the Borough to support non-motorised travel as a preferred choice for local journeys. Need to resolve missing links between existing network and infrastructure provided by development. Increase awareness ("soft measures") to influence travel behaviour.	DBC, KCC, EDC	KCC, EDC, Developer, CIL	Government published technical guidance for local authorities on the production of LCWIP's in 2017. Whilst these were not mandatory it was emphasised that local authorities that had such plans would be well placed in making a case for future investment. Work on Dartford's LCWIP began in Spring 2022 and was formally adopted by Cabinet on 20 July 2023 (Minute No.24). The LCWIP helps guide the approach to improving conditions for cycling and walking in a joined-up way and will inform working with KCC, as the local highway authority, to ensure that adequate consideration is given to cycling and walking in Dartford. The LCWIP provides: ▪ An understanding of existing and future travel patterns in the Borough, local constraints and opportunities to increase cycling and walking. ▪ Identification and mapping of the cycling network and walking zones that can become the primary focus for infrastructure improvements. ▪ A pipeline of potential enhancement locations, drawing from routes scored against consistent criteria, to ensure the delivery of infrastructure and an environment that effectively supports walking and cycling. The initial focus has been on routes where demand is high and, therefore, the majority of the cycling corridors and walking zones identified are within the urban areas of the Borough. These being: Cycling Corridors A, B, C and E all leading to/from the town centre Cycling Corridor D continuing east from Corridor C to link up with Ebbsfleet Garden City. Walking Zone 1 – located around the town centre Walking Zone 2 – encompassing Stone, Greenhithe and Bluewater Walking Zone 3 – centred around Swanscombe It is envisaged that more detailed engagement and consultation with the wider public, residents and businesses will take place as and when sections of the network are identified for infrastructure improvements and funding has been secured.
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Community					The potential for CIL to complement other sources of funding to ensure the delivery of a comprehensive cycling and walking network will be considered as the need arises.
	New/Improved Community Facilities.	To provide additional capacity for community facilities and services both in terms of provision as part of developments or as separate identified projects serving the needs generated by new development. Such facilities would deliver enhanced or additional services and could include: • leisure and recreation; • sporting facilities meeting a wider community need; • community buildings and places of worship providing community facilities; • open space; and • formal/informal play areas	DBC, Developer	CIL, s106, Developer, KCC	New development creates the need for community meeting places, community recreational and leisure facilities, sports facilities and infrastructure such as public toilets and changing facilities. Development also creates the need for additional services such as adult social care, library services, community learning and youth services. These can be accommodated through the provision of new facilities, where there is sufficient scale of development, or the improvement/enhancement of existing facilities. Services can also be provided through the shared use of flexible space within a facility. Funding support for such infrastructure through CIL would be dependent upon the criteria being met, the ability of the proposed infrastructure to meet the needs of development and the availability of any other sources of funding.
Education	Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent	Kent County Council publishes its Commissioning Plan on an annual basis identifying trends in demand for education provision and the ability of existing educational facilities to meet this demand. The Commissioning Plan covers primary and secondary education, early years and childcare, special needs and post-16 education and training.	KCC	DfE/ESFA, KCC, Developer, CIL	The Commissioning Plan provides a breakdown of the key issues affecting education provision across Dartford Borough and the wider North Kent Area. The plan is the principal source for identifying the provision of new schools or the expansion of existing schools. This takes into account education provision that has already been secured on major development sites through s106 Agreements such as those identified in Part 1 of the IDP related to the Whitecliffe (Eastern Quarry) development site. Where provision, in addition to that already secured, is identified the Council works with KCC Education to identify suitable sites for new schools and other educational facilities, the timescales for delivery and the opportunities where CIL is needed, as part of an overall package funding, to support delivery.

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Flood Defence	Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan	To ensure that existing tidal defences are resilient to future climate change as part of the Thames Estuary 2100 Project.	EA	EA	The 10-Year Review of the TE2100 Plan has reached its conclusion and a revised Plan has been published. This has looked at the need for a new Thames Barrier and identified 4 options. A decision on these options needs to be made by 2040 with implementation needed by 2070. An Asset Management Plan (AMP) is also being developed to quantify the residual life of existing assets in the Dartford and Erith area. The following assets have been considered: Dartford Creek Barrier – No immediate physical works are required. Welcome Sluice – A condition assessment is to be carried out but significant expenditure is not expected on this structure until pending this assessment. The Environment Agency is encouraging local authorities to produce Riverside Strategies in response to flood defence. In response the Council has worked with EA and produced the Lower Darent Riverside Strategy which is discussed separately below.
	Lower Darent Riverside Strategy	Identification of new flood risk management works along the river Darent likely to be required as a result of climate change. Opportunities to deliver flood defence improvements through planned development along the river identified in Dartford's Local Plan and increase flood attenuation within the marshes. Environmental enhancements along the river and improvements to accessibility both along and across the river	DBC	DBC, EA	The development of a Riverside Strategy for the Lower Darent fulfils the Council's ambition to shape an attractive, accessible and more sustainable place along the riverside as well as managing increasing flood risk as a result of climate change. The riverside strategy approach is promoted within the Thames Estuary 2100 (TE2100) Plan and the Council's work is supported by the Environment Agency (EA) who, in addition to funding support, provide technical advice on matters within their remit. Development of the Strategy is being funded through the Local Levy grant funding from EA's Southern Regional Flood & Coast Committee and Dartford Flood Risk Management Fund held buy EA. The Lower Darent Riverside Strategy was approved by Cabinet in February 2024. Consideration is to be given on how to take the recommendations forward including any specific infrastructure improvements proposed.

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Health	Kent & Medway Integrated Care Partnership	To provide additional capacity for acute and primary healthcare provision that serves planned development within Dartford Borough through the NHS Estates Strategy, Darent Valley Hospital Development Plan and other community based services strategies.	DGSHCP	NHS, CIL	The Kent & Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) came into effect in April 2022 bringing together the different arms of healthcare services under one umbrella group. Within this framework the Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley Health & Care Partnership (DGSHCP) was formed to provide a holistic approach to health care provision across North Kent. Extensive work has been completed by DGSHCP to determine the future demand for healthcare services based on the plans for growth set in the Local Plans of the relevant local authorities. The Council was engaged to input as required. The aim of the work carried out by DGSHCP was to review and update the Estates Strategy that determines what additional facilities and improvements to existing facilities are needed to meet future demand. DGSHCP, ICB, and DGT will continue to engage with the Council to continue to discuss improvements and infrastructure requirements that are needed to mitigate issues relating to healthcare provision within the Borough in response to the priority work streams in the HCP estates strategy.
	Bus Service Improvement Plan	To improve the reliability of and access to bus services across the Borough serving the wider community not served directly by Fastrack services. Encourage greater use of buses for local journeys through service improvements contributing to modal shift.	DBC, KCC, Bus Operators	KCC, CIL, s106	As a result of the National Bus Strategy published by Government in March 2021, KCC published its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in October 2021 and a Kent Thameside Enhanced Partnership, covering both Dartford and Gravesham, came into effect in April 2022. An update to the BSIP was produced by KCC in July 2024 at the request of Government and the Kent Enhanced Partnership Plan & Kent Thameside Enhanced Partnership Scheme (KTEPS) was also published in July 2024. Working with KCC, actions and projects targeted at improving bus services within Dartford are escalated through the governance structure that has been set up by KCC for funding through the BSIP allocations given to KCC. The potential for CIL to complement the funding that KCC receives through BSIP to ensure the delivery of improvements to the bus network and services within Dartford will be considered as the need arises.

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Transport	Fastrack Expansion/Enhancement	To ensure a good quality, reliable and frequent Fastrack service that would encourage local journeys by public transport reducing reliance on the private car. Strategic initiatives to complement on site provision being provided by major development sites	KCC, EDC	KCC, EDC, s106, CIL	Work streams generating projects that both improve the reliability of Fastrack services and enhance/expand services are identified and progressed through the Fastrack Advisory Board. Projects that have implemented or are in the process of being delivered include: ▪ Adoption of Route A (through The Bridge development) ▪ Upgrade of the Rennie Drive/Fastrack junction ▪ Procurement of a new operator for Fastrack services. ▪ Introduction of zero-emission vehicles. ▪ Acacia Hall Bus Hub (charging point for zero-emission vehicles) The above has not required any call on CIL funding for their delivery. For the longer term: ▪ Phased plan for additional routes and services as dedicated Fastrack routes through major development sites become available. ▪ Assessment of the Local Road Network to identify locations where additional bus priority measures could be introduced. ▪ Improved segregation of Fastrack through A282 Junction 1b. The potential for CIL to complement other sources of funding to ensure the delivery of a comprehensive and reliable Fastrack network will be considered as the need arises.
	Railway Station Improvements/Enhancement	To ensure that rail stations within the Borough are accessible for all users and provide facilities that encourage better integration between different modes of transport particularly more sustainable forms of transport. Enhancement of stations to meet growth in demand from planned development.	Network Rail	Network Rail, CIL, s106	Discussions with Network Rail through work on the extension of the Elizabeth Line services from Abbey Wood and the North & East Kent Connectivity Study raised awareness of the deficiencies at Dartford's rail stations in relation to the planned growth set out in Dartford's Local Plan. On-going discussions are focusing on: Dartford The Local Plan identifies the relocation of Dartford station to the west of its current location as a long-term option. Limited opportunities to improve current station due to constraints but some improvements could be done related to access to the platforms that could ease passenger flows. Scope for improvement/rationalisation of cycle storage and provision adjacent to the station and wayfinding between the station and the High Street/main shopping areas. Further

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Waste				improvements around the station are dependent on the future development of Station Mound. Stone Crossing Access to the station platforms require ramps to replace the remaining steps, additional shelters could be provided for waiting passengers and wayfinding could be improved to highlight the location of and access to the station. Swanscombe Improvements to station access with either roadside improvements to enable passengers to safely negotiate the existing road giving access to platforms. Alternatively a separate footbridge linking the platforms could be provided with ramps connecting the platforms to street level. Greenhithe Station building and over-bridge are relatively new with good connections to Fastrack and local bus services. Request for a taxi rank at the station is being explored in relation to the forecourt layout and adjacent land.
	Kent County Council Waste Strategy	To provide additional capacity for household waste recycling and waste transfer facilities for the Borough in response to growing demand from housing development within Ebbsfleet Garden City in particular and planned growth across North Kent.	KCC	KCC, EDC, s106, CIL KCC Waste has produced a Technical Appendix with the KCC Developer Contributions Guide that sets out the need for additional waste processing capacity across the County. This identifies a capacity issue with the existing Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in the medium term and a more urgent capacity issues with the Waste Transfer Station (WTS) at Pepperhill where the ability for further expansion is limited. KCC is actively working on a project to provide additional WTS capacity to serve North Kent and a site to the south of the existing Pepperhill facility is being explored. Funding support through CIL would be dependent upon the criteria being met and the ability of the proposed infrastructure to meet the needs of new development. As the facility would serve North Kent it is envisaged that at this stage any need for CIL funding would be part of an overall package of funding for the project.

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CABINET
05 December 2024
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
09 December 2024

LOCAL SCHEME OF SUPPORT FOR COUNCIL TAX 2025/26

1. Summary

- 1.1 To recommend the rolling forward of the Local Scheme of Support for Council Tax 2024/25, effective from 1 April 2025.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

To Cabinet

- 2.1 That the General Assembly of the Council be recommended to roll forward the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25, to be effective from 1 April 2025.

To the General Assembly of the Council

- 2.2 That the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25, be rolled forward to 2025/26, with effect from 1 April 2025.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme was introduced in April 2013 as a replacement for the Council Tax Benefit scheme administered on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions. The duty to create a local scheme for working age applicants was placed with billing authorities whilst persons of pension age continued to be protected under regulations prescribed by Government.
- 3.2. The Council is required to approve its local scheme of support for council tax each year and this has to been done by 11 March of the preceding financial year. The last significant change to the scheme was made for 2019/20 when the original means-tested scheme was replaced by a simple income grid model. Since then, the scheme has been rolled forward each year.
- 3.3. The local scheme was approved for 2024/25 on 11 December 2023 (Min. No 77). It is now recommended that the scheme approved for 2024/25 be rolled forward to 2025/26, with effect from 1 April 2025. A copy of the full scheme is available in the Members Area.
- 3.4. This scheme provides protection for pensioners in line with the Government's decision that pensioners would see no reduction in their entitlement from that under the old council tax benefit rules. The scheme allows for a maximum award for working age claimants of 80% and it is proposed that this remains unchanged for 2025/26.

CABINET
05 December 2024
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
09 December 2024

- 3.5. The award of council tax support is by way of a discount, which reduces the amount of council tax collected. Most of this reduction is borne by the major preceptors, with the Council suffering a reduction of approximately 10% of the total

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

Not applicable.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other implications and risk assessments*

Financial Implications	The annual cost of the current CTRS is £7.289m of which £5.094m relates to working-age claimants. A large proportion of this cost is borne by the major preceptors. Dartford's pro-rata share is approximately £728k (of which £509k relates to working age discounts). The major preceptors are also currently contributing £114,530 per annum to the Council towards the additional cost of administering the scheme and collecting the council tax.
Legal Implications	Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Council to make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to Council Tax due in respect of dwellings in its area. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 provides detailed requirements of a scheme. Acting on the recommendations is within the Council's powers as set out in the above statutory provisions.
Climate Impact Assessment	None. Available on request.
Staffing Implications	Resources are being monitored to ensure collection is maximised.
Administrative Implications	See staffing implications
Risk Assessment	No uncertainties and/or constraints - None specifically

CABINET
05 December 2024
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
09 December 2024

6. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable

7. Appendices

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
Previous reports to Cabinet and GAC		Heather Gaynor (01732) 227435		N/A

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CABINET
5 DECEMBER 2023

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
9 DECEMBER 2023

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS 2025/26

1. Summary

To agree the level of financial contributions to be paid to Parish and Town Councils in 2025/26 and to recommend accordingly.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

2.1 That, subject to paras. 2.2 and 2.3, the following contributions be made to Parish and Town Councils, to compensate for lost council tax income in local areas from the council tax support scheme:

Bean	334
Darenth	1,923
Longfield	631
Southfleet	198
Stone	7,021
Sutton at Hone and Hawley	1,737
Swanscombe and Greenhithe	14,435
Wilmington	1,317

2.2 That, the contributions be made subject to the Parish and Town Councils submitting suitably analysed details of estimated net expenditure for the ensuing year by 31 January 2025, and actual net expenditure for the preceding year no later than six months after the end of the 2024/25 financial year, in a format prescribed by the Council.

2.3 That the payments be made in two equal instalments, the first on 30 April 2025 (or next working day) and the second, the latter of 30 September 2025 (or next working day) or seven days following receipt of the Parish or Town Councils' 2023/24 accounts, certified as correct by their Clerks.

2.4 RECOMMENDATION TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL

That the General Assembly of the Council notes that the proposed contributions to Parish/Town Councils, for the year 2025/26, as set out in Appendix A to the report, will form part of the overall budget, to be submitted for approval at the 24 February 2025 Budget meeting.

CABINET
5 DECEMBER 2023

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
9 DECEMBER 2023

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1. The parish and town council element of council tax support funding sits with the Borough Council as the billing authority. It is for the Borough Council to pass a share of local council tax support to its Parish/Town Councils and exercising its discretion, to agree an appropriate level/distribution of funding for each Parish/Town Council, depending on local circumstances.
- 3.2. The amount received by Parishes/Town Councils, in 2024/25 was £27,596 (in total).
- 3.3. It is important that Parish/Town Councils receive advance notice of the Council's plans in order to set their own budgets and Council Tax levels.
- 3.4. Funding remains in place at the same levels as 2024/25 for lost council tax income in local areas from the council tax support scheme. No amount for inflation is determined as it is unknown what support the Council is likely to receive and keeping the fund at the same level is intended to encourage Parish/Town Councils to be more self-sufficient so that in time this contribution can be removed as the pressure on the Council increases.
- 3.5. The proposed level of Council Tax Support Grant 2025/26 is shown in Appendix A, to the report.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The contribution by the Council assists Parishes and Town Councils to provide high quality services that reflect public aspirations and to ensure that public and open spaces are clean and safe.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	The total sum payable by the Council to Parish and Town Councils in 2025/26 will be £27,596.
Legal Implications	Section 136 of the Local Government Act 1972. - two or more local authorities may make arrangements for defraying any expenditure incurred by one of them in exercising any functions exercisable by both or all of them.
Public Sector Equality Duty	Not applicable

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
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Climate Change Implications	None
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	No uncertainties and/or constraints

6. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable

7. Appendices

Appendix A - Amounts payable to Parish and Town Councils

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
Parish Accounts		Tim Sams (01322) 343148	Financial Services/ Corporate Services	N/A

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AMOUNTS PAYABLE TO PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS IN 2024/25 and 2025/26		
	2024/25	2025/26
	CTS grant	CTS grant
	£	£
Bean	334	334
Darenth	1,923	1,923
Longfield	631	631
Southfleet	198	198
Stone	7,021	7,021
Sutton at Hone and Hawley	1,737	1,737
Swanscombe and Greenhithe	14,435	14,435
Wilmington	1,317	1,317
Total	27,596	27,596

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REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2024/25 – PROJECTED OUTTURN

1. Summary

- 1.1 To notify Members of the Projected Outturn on the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account, with the reasons for significant variances.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Members note the projected outturn position for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account, as set out respectively, in Appendices A, B and C to the report.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1 The revenue budgets for 2024/25 were approved by the Council on 26 February 2024 [Min. No. 99]. This is the third of our four planned monitoring reports submitted during the year, and provides Members with estimates of the projected outturn.
- 3.2 Spending Officers were asked to produce their estimates of projected outturn as at the end of October 2024. This report identifies the significant variances between the budget and the projected outturns.
- 3.3 **General Fund** – In the first half of the year, budget monitoring is based on comparing actual expenditure/income against that expected for the relevant period. From September onwards, budget monitoring concentrates on projecting the final year-end figures (outturn).
- 3.4 Appendix A shows the General Fund summary. Full details are available should any Member wish to see them.
- 3.5 The projected outturn on the General Fund shows a potential net underspend on the budget of £2,899,450. A commentary on significant variances is provided in Appendix B. There are some areas showing potential significant overspends but these are more than offset by many areas showing projected significant additional income or underspending.
- 3.6 Appendix A shows the:
- Original Budget 2024/25, as approved by the Council on 26 February 2024
 - Current Budget 2024/25- the Original Budget adjusted for approved virements

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- Projected Outturn for 2024/25
- Projected Variance, which is the difference between the Current Budget and the Projected Outturn. A variance shown in brackets is better than expected (i.e. reduced expenditure and/or increased income), whereas one shown without is worse (i.e. increased expenditure and/or reduced income).

4. Business Rates

- 4.1 The budget for 2024/25 was set at £7.7m. Additional growth of £2.9m was also expected.
- 4.2 Monitoring to date shows that this is likely to be achieved. The small gain initially anticipated in July now looks less likely due to increases in empty properties. The business rates base has been relatively stable during the period.
- 4.3 Total retained receipts will also depend on the appeals position which is being monitored carefully to understand the impact of the check, challenge and appeal system on the 2017 and 2023 lists. Check, challenge and appeals are being determined at a faster rate and there are only 14 cases remaining from the 2017 list. It is currently expected that the remaining provision will be adequate to fund the determined appeals. Checks and challenges are still being made for the 2023 list and the Council continues to retain a proportion of income to provide for these.

5. Housing Revenue Account

- 5.1. The year-end balance to be carried forward into 2025/2026 is projected to be approximately £9.6m. The net expenditure on the HRA for 2024/2025 is estimated at a surplus of £807k compared with the budgeted deficit of £3.28m. The revenue underspend is mainly a timing issue caused by changes in the rules around the use of retained capital receipts for the new homes programme. The underspend will be used for continued investment in subsequent years.
- 5.2. A commentary on significant variances is provided in Appendix B and the summary Housing Revenue Account is shown in Appendix C.

6. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

A set of core values underpins the corporate plan which includes that the council will maintain sustainable council finances and strong governance and ensure transparency in decision making.

Regular monitoring and reporting of the Council's financial position are key to maintaining sustainable council finances.

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7. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	The General Fund shows a projected net underspend of approximately £2.8m. Based on this it is likely that an additional contribution to reserves can be made to support future spending plans. The HRA currently shows a projected surplus for the year of £807K, which is £4m lower than the budget as discussed above. The balance at the year-end on the HRA is estimated at £9.6m.
Legal Implications	This report is compliant with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and CIPFA/SOLACE 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' Framework' Section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 1999 imposes a requirement on all local authorities to deliver what is termed "best value" – essentially, to be able to demonstrate that the council is making arrangements that are economic, efficient, and effective, and that it has regard to the need to secure continuous improvement in how it carries out its work.
Public Sector Equality Duty	Not applicable
Climate Impact Assessment	None for this monitoring report.
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	There is an ongoing risk of not being able to meet the Council's objectives within the approved budget; regular budget monitoring and swift action to correct budget failures significantly reduce the risk.

8 Appendices

Appendix A: General Fund Summary

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Appendix B: Commentary on Significant General Fund and Housing Revenue
Account Variances

Appendix C: Housing Revenue Account Summary

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
Budget Monitoring papers	Nov 2024		Tim Sams 01322 343148	Finance/ Corporate Services	N/A

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

	BUDGET 2024/2025 £	CURRENT BUDGET 2024/25 £	PROJECTED OUTTURN 2024/25 £	PROJECTED VARIANCE 2024/25 £
GROWTH AND COMMUNITY	3,701,160	3,549,300	3,791,230	241,930
HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION	12,905,190	12,810,210	14,618,840	1,808,630
CORPORATE SERVICES	4,389,550	4,352,490	(263,620)	(4,616,110)
	20,995,900	20,712,000	18,146,450	(2,565,550)
Plus				
Increase in provision for doubtful debts	0	0	0	0
Allowance for Inflation	550,000	338,050	50,000	(288,050)
Less				
Employee vacancy factor	(300,000)	195,850	0	(195,850)
Support to other funds	(1,350,000)	(1,350,000)	(1,350,000)	0
	19,895,900	19,895,900	16,846,450	(3,049,450)
Temporary Accommodation Capital/Project Reserve	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	0
Capital Projects Reserve	3,500,000	3,500,000	5,549,450	2,049,450
Earmarked Reserve Replenishment	0	0	1,000,000	1,000,000
Identified Initiatives Reserve	843,607	843,607	843,607	0
Financial Stability Reserve	795,283	795,283	795,283	0
Contribution to Reserves	6,638,890	6,638,890	6,638,890	0
Net General Fund Budget	26,534,790	26,534,790	23,485,340	(3,049,450)
Revenue Support Grant	(145,390)	(145,390)	(145,390)	0
Business Rate Retention (Baseline including cap compensation)	(3,507,000)	(3,507,000)	(3,507,000)	0
Business Rate Retention (Growth)	(3,498,000)	(3,498,000)	(3,498,000)	0
Business Rate Retention (Pooling Gain)	(765,000)	(765,000)	(765,000)	0
Business Rate Retention Deficit/ (Surplus)*	(6,269,220)	(6,269,220)	(6,269,220)	0
Homes Bonus	(1,228,340)	(1,228,340)	(1,228,340)	0
Funding Guarantee	(3,294,170)	(3,294,170)	(3,294,170)	0
Services Grant	(18,960)	(18,960)	(18,960)	0
Total Grant and Business Rates Income	(18,726,080)	(15,412,950)	(15,412,950)	0
Collection Fund Deficit	(220,310)	(220,310)	(220,310)	0
Council Tax	(7,588,400)	(7,588,400)	(7,588,400)	0
Total Income	(26,534,790)	(23,221,660)	(23,221,660)	0
USE OF GENERAL BALANCES/RESERVES	0	0	0	0
Total Income	(26,534,790)	(23,221,660)	(23,221,660)	0

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Commentary on Projected Outturn for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account

GENERAL FUND

Staff Savings

The vacancy savings factor has been set at £300,000 for the year and was met at the end of the second quarter. It is now projected that the outturn will be in the region of £495,000 resulting in an additional saving of £195,000. In order to ensure service delivery, this year there has been a need to use specialist agency staff and contractors reducing the likely salary savings when compared to previous financial years.

Inflation Allowance

Each year a global sum is set aside within the budget for inflation increases and for 2024/25 is set at £550,000. Throughout the year, as and when annual increases in contracts/annual payments are determined, virements are actioned to the appropriate budget headings from the set aside sum. At the end of quarter two, £148,00 of this allowance had been used on the Council's main contracts. Further calls on the allowance have been identified through the detailed projected outturn exercise and a further £63,950 has been allocated, a total of £211,950 to date. A project for further needs of £50,000 is expected. Overall, the amount needed is lower due to the reducing inflation rate.

Investment Income

The Council has already achieved investment income above the budget set. Over the 12-month period to 31 October the externally managed pooled funds have achieved an income return of 4.95% and the in-house managed funds achieved an average rate of 4.94%. Cash balances have remained high. The Bank Rate was 5.25% at the start of the financial year but the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee voted to reduce the Bank Rate on 1 August to 5% and to 4.75% on 7 November. Interest rate forecasts currently predict a further rate cut before the end of the financial year. It is therefore likely that the Council will achieve a lower return from its in-house investments during the second half of the year.

Special Events

It is anticipated that the budget allocation of £134,650 for Special Events is sufficient to cover a wider programme of planned events in 2024/25. To facilitate the coordination of the Christmas Lights event, an initial budget virement of £25,000 has been actioned from the Town Centre budget to Special Events to support this. This is lower than the £38,000 2023/24 cost of the event. The Events team has sought cost savings where possible, but a more realistic budget of £33,000 will be required to deliver the Christmas Lights event in 2024. There will be sufficient in the overall Special Events budget to meet this cost. Any residual budget will be used to support the Identified Initiatives Reserve events budget for events planned for the remainder of the year.

Larger Income Streams Achieving or Close to Current Budgets

Land Charges

The budget for 2024/25 is £80,000. Income is just above its target and it is looking likely that outturn will be close to budget, however this will depend upon how the housing market progresses. The period December to February tends to be slower, so less income is expected in the second half of the year. To be prudent, the projection is as per the budget.

Dartford Markets

The markets income budget was set at £120,000 for 2024/25 and this looks set to be achieved with projected income of £127,000. The severity of the winter weather and its subsequent impact on cancellations will ultimately still be a big determinant on the income that can be achieved.

Licensing

The income budget for vehicle licensing was reduced from £57,000 to £45,000 reflecting the downward trend in licence renewals in recent years. Last year's outturn was £44,726. There has been an increase in the number of applicants taking the knowledge test in the first part of the year and it is projected that the reduced budget will be achieved.

At this stage, it also looks promising that the general licensing budget of £87,100 should be met.

Council Tax and Business Rates Court Fees

The combined budget for Council Tax and Business Rates court fees of £460,000 is estimated to be met.

Areas of significant underspend or overachievement of income

Cemeteries Income

The cemeteries income budget was set at £207,910, with a projection of £250,000. Uptake on the columbaria purchase accounts for £31,000 of the increased income. To help alleviate pressures on the Open Spaces budget, a virement of £25,000 has been actioned from this income budget.

Car Parking Income

The budget of £397,000 for car park fines is expected to be achieved while the fees and charges budget of £457,320 is projected to achieve £567,000, partly reflective of higher fees as at April 2024.

Revenues and Benefits Shared Services

An underspend of £110,000 is projected due largely to staff vacancies and a new budget of £58,000 for additional licencing costs being effectively deemed as surplus to requirements this year as costs have been absorbed into existing budgets.

Corporate Property Rental

The budget for income for corporate property rentals and service charges is £753,530. One of the Council's medium sized properties that had been vacant for a while has now begun to again produce rental income. There will be a small shortfall of budgeted income of £3,000 on that particular property for this financial year.

A vacant property that provides a notable rental income is currently being marketed to find a new tenant. There are still some difficulties in establishing a secure tenant for this let and therefore it is assumed a full year's loss of income of £100,000 at this stage.

Against this anticipated loss of income, the in-year acquirement of the Copperfields site is likely to produce income of just over £135,000

Waste Management

Waste service income has performed well. The initial income budget for Eurobins, boxes and garden waste was set at £544,720, the projected outturn for the combined income is £652,000, some of which will be attributable to the fees and charges increase in April 2024, Virements totalling £31,000 have been actioned from these income budgets to assist with pressures currently projected with the Open Spaces budget.

The overall projected savings position for the waste service shows a net underspend of £109,000 against the revised budget (after virements). Projections for the service include the suspension of the annual payment to the Kent Resource Partnership for this year and lower expenditure against the contractor's budgets. Due to these savings the annual budgeted reserve contribution of £25,000 will not be applied.

Members Expenses

Members' expenses are projected to be £32,000 under budget. Members' allowances are £20,000 lower than budget due to the reduction of one Cabinet Member during the year while the former post holder is Mayor, a vacancy and some flexibility within the budget for any changes. This is along with a reduced requirement this year in day-to-day expenditure such as member training, printing of agendas, hosting external meetings, office expenses and transportation costs

Areas of significant overspend or underachievement of income

Temporary Accommodation – net overspend of £1,948,310

As in previous years, the Housing team has continued working extremely hard in increasingly challenging times to accommodate the homeless to ensure the Council provides temporary accommodation to those that are entitled to it. This has inevitably led to expenditure on nightly paid accommodation continuing to be considerably higher than previous years.

DPLS (Dartford Private Leasing Scheme) spend is projected to be £1,830,000 which is £195,000 less than budget and £95,000 less than actual spend in 2023/24. This is due to some reductions in the number of properties leased to the Council. The recent inflationary climate and high interest rates made it a challenge to retain properties as lease renewals arise. Also, the Council purchased 13 units at Copperfields which were previously being paid for within the DPLS budget.

Nightly paid accommodation is projected to be £5,490,000 which is £2,690,340 more than budget and £2,497,000 more than actual spend in 2023/24.

The increased pressure on temporary accommodation spend this year is due to the following issues:

- numbers of people presenting as homeless in the last year has increased,

- the ability to move people already in accommodation reduced by increasing costs in the private rented sector, and
- temporary accommodation providers have increased their prices in response to an increase in interest rates, contractors' costs, etc.

Homelessness Prevention

The Housing team continue to assist those who are at risk of homelessness which in turn reduces the use of nightly paid temporary accommodation, wherever possible.

Homelessness Prevention spend is projected to be £130,000 more than budget this year and £265,000 more than actual spend in 2023/24. The majority of the projected overspend, which totals £300,000 is in relation to emergency hotel bookings, family incentive payments, homeless prevention payments, rent deposits and rent in advance but this is partially offset by an additional grant of around £180,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Local Government and Communities (MHCLG).

Looking forward, it is felt that nightly rates paid to temporary accommodation providers are unlikely to increase significantly but the number of people facing homelessness will remain at high levels and there is no expectation of a decline in need.

Planning Income

The planning fee income budget for the year is £470,810. There have been three receipts in excess of £25,000 with one of these at just over £55,000 in the first half of the year but there is no certainty of any further significant receipts this financial year. Any larger receipts in the later part of the year would need to be considered as full or part attributable to the following financial year and would be subject to the relevant adjustment. Applications are currently at a lower level and therefore at this stage a cautious projection of £440,000 has been included. This will be reviewed as part of the probable outturn exercise in early January.

The combined other fees annual budget is £140,000 with a cautious projection of £87,000 to reflect current levels of income. The smaller income budgets for householder pre-app advice and planning enquiries are likely to meet their budgets. Income against the higher value budgets for pre app advice for non-householders and planning performance agreements at £47,000 and £84,000 respectively is low and has been reflected in their projections of £25,000 and £55,000.

Building Control income

In 2023/24, with the addition of a new post within the building control team, the income budget was increased to £401,240 on the basis that additional income would be generated. This new post was identified as a requirement due to the increased pressure and responsibility on the team due to the Building Safety Act requirements. However, not all of the secondary legislation has been enacted and the post remains unfilled. Income for the first six months of the year was higher than for the same period last year. This is likely to be due to an increase in commercial applications from Bluewater and from a new housing development application at Ebbsfleet. With the current variable market activity, the latest projected income for the year is £320,000. Salary savings offset the reduced income.

Planning Policy

The budget for the service holds an income budget of £69,440 for external funding. The projection for the year is £20,000, a shortfall of £49,000, however there are salary savings of £22,000 to help offset this shortfall. Additionally the team has been working on the new bus shelter contract, effective from 1 January 2025 which is projected to bring in a minimum of £31,500 for the quarter January to March 2025.

The Nucleus

Unfortunately, the Nucleus has lost one of its largest customers. Given this, income is down for the year but is expected to pick up as the year progresses and new tenants are engaged. The total budget is set at a net income of £50,000 but at this stage it is more likely that a deficit of at least £125,000 will be made. Work on a new management contract is ongoing and a business rates consultant has been instructed which is likely to improve the picture.

Legal Services Income

Legal Services income is projected to reduce by an estimated £22,000. A budget of £25,000 is set as a recharge for legal fees attributable to the HRA. This has been reducing in recent years and is projected at £15,000 for 2024/25. The miscellaneous income budget of £22,000 is unlikely to be met with a projection of £10,000. The largest proportion of income has traditionally been derived from section 106 agreements and these are now significantly reducing.

Open Spaces

There is a projected overspend of approximately £55,000 for open spaces for three main reasons. Unbudgeted costs have been incurred regarding enforcement action at Darenth Country Park at a cost of £14,000 and the payment of Council Tax on the Bailiff's Cottage at the same site for £11,000. The property now carries a 200% Long Term Empty Premium. The balance of the projected overspend is due to necessary and urgent works at the various sites and is consistent with the demands of the previous financial year.

Contributions To and From Reserves

Orchard West

The costs associated with the running of the temporary theatre, whilst RAAC plank removal, roof replacement and associated works at the Orchard Theatre are undertaken are projected at £688,000 for this year. This cost and the contribution from the reserve has been included within the projected outturn.

Westgate Site

Members have been kept informed regarding progress at the Westgate/Former Co-op site. The projection for the use of reserves at this site for this financial year is £700,000

Master Planning

Budget provision was made for the master planning in 2023/24 and as it was unused in that financial year, the sum was transferred to reserves for future use. There is an anticipated use of this sum amounting to £95,000 in the current financial year.

Waste Management

The waste management service includes a budgeted contribution from the waste management reserve of £25,000, with income higher and lower contractor spend compared to budget the transfer from the reserve is not required this financial year.

Corporate Land & Properties

Following, one of the Council's main rented properties falling into administration, expenditure been incurred for the property, including security, utility and contractor costs. The projection for the year is £75,000 and these costs will be reserve funded.

Town Centre Regeneration

Following on from capital works for the town centre regeneration, unbudgeted revenue costs of £62,000 in the current financial are to be reserve funded.

Legal Fees and Planning Fees

There are two potential planning inquiries this financial year and the legal and specialist fees are estimated at £90,000 and these costs will be funded from reserves.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Overall, the Housing Revenue Account is currently expected to outturn at £4,025,000 under budget, which will leave it with a balance of £9,603,750 to be carried forward into 2025/26.

The main variances are as follows:

Revenue Contribution to Capital and Depreciation Charge

Whilst the capital budget is projected to underspend by £2.5m the revenue account is projecting reduced capital expenditure of £3.034m.

Firstly, the reduction in revenue costs is due to an increased use of retained capital receipts. This mainly because of changes to the 1-4-1 scheme which, when the budget was set, required the Council to use 60% of its own funding on new building housing with the other 40% coming from the 1-4-1 receipts. The rules on the scheme were changed before the general election and then again in July so that any new build or purchase schemes can now be fully funded from retained receipts, freeing up the Council's £2.2m planned revenue contribution in the short term.

In year £300,000 of this budget will be used for the demolition of flats at Leonard Avenue which is a revenue cost.

There is also an underspend of £1.8m on other schemes, £707,000 relates to a grant funded scheme so the total HRA reduction is £1.1m. Most of which is due to profiling issues and will be factored into future years budgets.

Interest Receivable

The interest rate in April 2024 was 5.25% which was higher than last year and is currently at 4.75% having been cut from 5.00% recently (7th November 2025). Interest attributable to the HRA is predicted to be £157,000 more than the prudently set budget.

Rents from houses

This year, rents are projected to be just over £355,000 more than budget. Voids at this stage have been lower than allowed for in the budget.

Rents non-dwelling

This year, non-dwelling rents are projected to be just over £114,000 more than budget which reflects good uptake and increased yields in commercial properties and garages.

General Management

General management is projected to be £63,000 over budget this year. There is an underspend of £193,000 relating to staffing/post vacancies and an underspend of £40,000 for recharge of legal fees/costs. There are a number of significant areas of overspend, namely; insurance recharges for employees and premises (c. £94,000), software and subscriptions (c. £82,500), contracted services such as estate cleaning and garage management (c. £68,000) and electricity (c. £33,000).

Special Management

Special Management is projected to underspend by approximately £152,000. The largest underspend is on staffing/post vacancies within the Lettings & Allocations Team. There is also a total underspend of £30,000 for the Bedroom Release scheme and Choice Based Lettings which are mainly reactive and difficult to anticipate and/or forecast. There is an overachievement in hall hire income at Temple Hill Community Centre which indicates a rise in people's confidence to go to clubs and events post Covid.

Housing Services for the Elderly

This area is predicted to underspend by £214,000. There is an underspend in salaries of £50,000 due to a vacant post and a reduced requirement for overtime. The most significant variance relates to gas costs which are predicted to underspend by £152,500 due to rates being significantly lower than initially budgeted. There are some overspends for premises related insurance recharges (c. £6,000) and Internet subscription costs (c. £7,000)

Repairs

Budgets from 2023/24 were increased to allow for inflationary contract uplifts. Due to the consistency of the weather so far this year, i.e. no severe periods of wind and/or rain, the volume of reactive repairs undertaken is broadly in line with budget expectations. There are, however, a number of overdue works that are scheduled to be completed by the end of the financial year, as well as the anticipated higher levels of adverse weather linked repairs, which will see an increase in spend in certain areas.

After a review of current spend, the Housing Maintenance Manager expects planned and general repairs to spend full budget (£2.11m general and £3m planned) and the Council to achieve full budgeted recharge income of £50,000. There are some areas of under/overspend in planned repairs that compensate each other; Gas Servicing (overspend £40,000), Asbestos Surveys (overspend £24,000), Sheltered Schemes (underspend £22,000) and Legionella Controls (underspend £40,500).

Miscellaneous

Other areas of projected overspend relate to Section 20 Major Works to roofs at Porteus Court which is a block of Council properties which are managed by agents as we are not the freeholder (£15,000) and the costs incurred for Council Tax liabilities from void properties (£20,000)

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APPENDIX C

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

	ORIGINAL BUDGET 2024/25 £	CURRENT BUDGET 2024/25 £	PROJECTED OUTTURN 2024/25 £	PROJECTED VARIANCE 2024/25 £
Income and Expenditure Account				
Income				
Rents from houses	(21,852,840)	(21,852,840)	(22,208,000)	(355,160)
Other rents	(877,090)	(877,090)	(990,760)	(113,670)
Tenants' Charges for Services and Facilities	(1,205,430)	(1,205,430)	(1,226,420)	(20,990)
Leaseholders' Charges for Services and Facilities	(275,000)	(275,000)	(253,540)	21,460
Minor Capital Receipts	0	0	(31,340)	(31,340)
Other Grants and Contributions	0	0	(17,250)	(17,250)
Total Income	(24,210,360)	(24,210,360)	(24,727,310)	(516,950)
Expenditure				
General management	5,663,950	5,663,950	5,727,460	63,510
Special management	906,630	906,630	754,600	(152,030)
Housing services for the elderly	1,114,450	1,114,450	900,810	(213,640)
Planned repairs	1,439,390	2,139,390	2,131,870	(7,520)
General repairs	2,059,290	2,059,290	2,059,290	0
General repairs - voids	878,010	878,010	878,010	0
Provision for bad debts	150,000	150,000	150,000	0
Leonard Avenue Demolition Works	0	300,000	300,000	0
Miscellaneous	101,790	101,790	137,980	36,190
Capital charges:				
Depreciation - dwellings	4,456,000	4,456,000	4,139,050	(316,950)
Depreciation - non-dwelling assets	196,020	196,020	419,230	223,210
Total Expenditure	16,965,530	17,965,530	17,598,300	(367,230)
Net cost of services	(7,244,830)	(6,244,830)	(7,129,010)	(884,180)
Interest payable	816,100	816,100	772,030	(44,070)
Interest receivable	(247,058)	(247,058)	(404,190)	(157,132)
Debt repayment	3,543,490	3,543,490	3,543,490	0
Net operating expenditure	(3,132,298)	(2,132,298)	(3,217,680)	(1,085,382)
Appropriations				
Transfer from Major Repairs Reserve - Depreciation	(196,020)	(196,020)	0	196,020
Revenue Contribution to Capital	6,547,000	5,547,000	2,411,000	(3,136,000)
Deficit/(Surplus) for the year	3,218,682	3,218,682	(806,680)	(4,025,362)
Balance brought forward	(8,955,920)	(8,955,920)	(8,797,070)	158,850
Balance carried forward	(5,737,238)	(5,737,238)	(9,603,750)	(3,866,512)

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**CAPITAL PROGRAMME BUDGET MONITORING 2024/2025 -
PROGRESS AND PROJECTED OUTTURN**

1. Summary

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the progress to date on the schemes in the approved Capital Programme, and to report the latest position on capital resources.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the progress made to date as described in the report and appendix A &B, on the 2024/25 Capital Programme, be noted.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1. The original budget for 2024/25 was approved by the Council on 26 February 2024 at £34,209,000 [Min No 99]. On 25 July 2024 Cabinet approved a reduction to the budget of £12,000 following the outturn of the 2023/24 capital programme [Min No 37]. In addition, a virement between a HRA (Housing Revenue Account) capital budget and HRA revenue budget was approved, reducing the capital budget by £700,000 [Min No 40]. Cabinet approved the purchase of Copperfields at the meeting on 18 April 2024 [Min No 133] – a mixed-use block of residential flats and commercial units, thereby increasing the capital budget by £4,050,000 via specifically allocated Temporary Accommodation reserves. The Head of Finance agreed an additional £190,000 from reserves to cover the stamp duty payment due on the purchase of Copperfields. The Head of Finance, under delegated authority, approved £77,000 from the repairs and renewals reserve to fund outfield renewal works at Hesketh Park. The budget for disabled facilities grants has been updated to reflect the actual grant allocation for the year. The total capital budget is now £37,875,500.

- 3.2. Attached as Appendices A and B to this report, are details of the Capital Programme and budget for 2024/25. These detail the resources available for Housing and General Fund projects respectively, and the expenditure to the 31 October 2024.

3.3. **Housing Revenue Account projects**

The budget approved by GAC on 26 February 2024 was £13.379m. The £700,000 virement detailed in 3.1, from the capital rewiring budget to the revenue modernisation budget, means that the budget is now £12.679m for 2024/25.

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HRA Programme

There have been some performance issues with the Council's building maintenance contractor which has meant that some work programmes have had to be reduced or amended. The Council is actively monitoring the performance and working with the contractor to get performance back to acceptable standards. Where spend is not looking likely to match the budget set a comment has been provided below:

Asbestos Removal – overspend £15,000

This budget is for reactive works required when asbestos is found in the course of other works. There has been an increase in demand on this service so far this year so a small overspend is expected.

Rising main replacement – overspend £2,000

The tender for the works has come in slightly over the budget set.

Door replacements – overspend £40,000

Additional works above the forecast programme have been required and will result in an overspend against budget.

Kitchens and bathrooms – overspend £300,000

If a property becomes void the opportunity is taken to replace the kitchen and bathroom if required. There has been a greater demand from void properties this year on this budget. The cost per property for bathrooms has increased due to upgrading wet rooms and installing over the bath showers as standard. Both of these factors have contributed to the likely overspend forecast. The overspend can be met from the forecast communal areas underspend.

External wall rendering – underspend of £645,000 (increase to the Council funding element of £162,000)

This is a part grant funded scheme that commenced during 2023/24. The grant contribution per property is capped at £10,000. Cost per property has significantly risen and this together with tenants refusing the work/not allowing access and installation complications, has meant that fewer properties will now be completed under the scheme. The full grant allocation will not be used. It is anticipated that a total of 93 properties over the two-year period will be completed. Whilst the total expenditure under this scheme is going to be lower, the Council's contribution needed to complete these properties has risen and will overspend by £162,000. This overspend can be met from the underspend on the window replacement programme.

Roof tanks/water mains supply – underspend £30,000

Roof tanks are currently being assessed and where the assessments identify a need to replace the water tank this budget is used. There is some work anticipated but it is unlikely that full budget will be needed.

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Communal Areas – underspend £300,000

The programme of works has been reduced.

Lift replacement – underspend of £10,000

There are no further planned refurbishments this year so this budget will only be utilised if there are significant lift works required following a breakdown.

Major repairs – underspend of £220,000

There are no major repairs currently programmed.

Window replacement – underspend of £873,000

This programme of works has been reduced due to contractor performance issues.

New Homes – underspend of £700,000

The Gilbert Road new home scheme is due to complete before the end of the financial year. The underspend forecast is generally in relation to the Westgate project which is due to go out to tender soon but work is not likely to start within this financial year. The Council was also successful in claiming back £90K of stamp duty payments in relation to properties purchased in prior years.

When the Council set the budget for the year, the 1-4-1 scheme rules dictated that the Council should fund the new build scheme 50% from 1-4-1 receipts and 50% from the Housing Revenue Account. In July the newly elected Government issued an update to the rules, the Council may now fund the full 2024/25 and 2025/26 expenditure from the 1-4-1 receipts.

3.4 General Fund projects:

The budget approved by GAC on 26 February 2024 was £20.830m. On 25 July 2024 Cabinet approved a reduction to the budget of £12,000 following the outturn of the 2023/24 capital programme [Min No 37]. Cabinet approved the purchase of Copperfields at the meeting on 18 April 2024 [Min No 133] – a mixed-use block of residential flats and commercial units, thereby increasing the capital budget by £4,050,000 via specifically allocated Temporary Accommodation reserves. The Head of Finance agreed an additional £190,000 from reserves to cover the stamp duty payment due on the purchase of Copperfields from the same reserve. The Head of Finance, under delegated authority, approved £77,000 from the repairs and renewals reserve to fund outfield renewal works at Hesketh Park. The budget for disabled facilities grants has been updated to reflect the actual grant allocation for the year. The total general fund budget for 2024/25 is now £25.196m.

Comments on those schemes which are likely to outturn below or above budget or those where there have been a change to the budget are as follows:

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Orchard Theatre

Whilst the projection in Appendix B is currently shown to budget, for transparency the position on the project is as follows:

The roof has now been replaced and the job of upgrading/replacing lighting, heating, air handling and fire safety systems is underway. Those systems are complex and run through the entire building. The findings of the recently published investigation into the tragic events at Grenfell Tower have informed and significantly affected the ongoing fire safety works and some of the final parts of the work to be carried out will pick up what has been learned. This is over and above what was originally envisaged and emanating from this it is evident that significant changes and upgrades to the fire prevention, detection and compartmentation systems are required to the building. This in turn has left the Council with no option but to upgrade significant elements of the infrastructure of the building in relation to the entire electrical system, the air handling and fire suppression systems, the heating systems and the kitchen layout. Works undertaken to date are within the budget approved through emergency decision making powers. There will be additional budget required once the full works required have been scoped which will be formally reported once scoping is complete.

Acacia Hall – overspend of £16,000

Some work to building D scheduled for the previous year was finally completed earlier this financial year but no budget had been carried over for the work. The expenditure can be met from underspends on other schemes noted below.

Leisure and Open Spaces – overspend of £49,000

The overspend on this budget is the works required to the toilets in Central Park by the café. These were scheduled for completion during 2022/23 but were not completed until this financial year. Budget should have been rolled forward to complete this work. The expenditure can be met from underspends on other schemes noted below.

Stone Lodge – underspend of £807,000

The project is still at planning and procurement stage and will not progress to the works phase until later in the year or start of 2025/26. The underspend forecast will need to be rolled forward to allow for work to complete during the next financial year.

Dartford town centre transport and public realm improvements – underspend of £525,000

The underspend forecast this year is mainly due to the HMV bollards work which will now not happen until 2025/26 due to estimated costs coming in more than the budget available. Additional funding is being investigated, and consultation being undertaken on how the bollards will operate, before the works can be approved.

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Civic Centre internal repairs and improvements – underspend of £61,000

The lift works have been procured and are due to start early in the new year. The full works will not be complete however before the year-end and final payment will be made in 2025/26. The underspend forecast will need to be rolled forward to finish the project.

Community infrastructure levy – underspend of £4,673,000

£2.5m of the budget was earmarked for the medical centre in Steele Avenue, Greenhithe. Planning permission was granted in May and the bid for CIL funding is in the process of being submitted for a Cabinet decision in January. If allocation is approved the work is likely to start during 2025/26 and the CIL allocation paid out during 2025/26 and 2026/27.

£1m of the budget was allocated to the local cycle and walking infrastructure project but this project has now transformed into the A226 London Road sustainable transport corridor project. Concept design exists which is due out for consultation before final design can be agreed. Delivery of the plan will depend on a successful bid from Governments Active Travel Fund. The £1m will not be spent this year.

£0.8m of the underspend is as a result of not paying out the full allocation for the Stone Recreation project within the year, some of this will likely be claimed during 2025/26.

The remaining underspend is for unparished projects that are not likely to fully progress to payment stage within the year.

Air quality monitoring station equipment – underspend of £7,000

Quotes for the equipment have come in slightly under the budget set.

Manor Gatehouse works – underspend of £200,000

The tender has been awarded for the project and initial meetings with the contractor agreed. The work will commence within the year but are not likely to be finished as some of the work required is to the outside of the building which will be weather dependent. The underspend will be required in 2025/26 to complete the project.

Environmental improvements – ecology island & outdoor theatre – overspend of £20,000

The cost of works has risen due to planning requirements for the bridge. The overspend can be met from underspends on other projects.

Home upgrade grant phase 2 – underspend of £396,000

The overall scheme has been tricky; finding recipients for the work that meet the low-income thresholds, gathering the evidence, obtaining surveys, getting the recipient to agree the works required and then finally submitting the work for approval by the grant provider. However, Dartford (together with Dover District Council) have been far more successful than others administering the scheme. Due to the difficulties administering the scheme, the full grant allocation is unlikely to be spent before the scheme ends in January.

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Purchase of Copperfields – underspend of £33,000

The budget allowed for the legal costs associated with the purchase was higher than the final charge received.

Disabled facilities grants – overspend of £190,000

The budget set for this year was to match the grant allocation received. The Council has already issued £541,000 of grants and therefore anticipates spending not only this year's grant allocation but the unused grant from last year of £190,000. Whilst an overspend compared to budget is reported here, this can be met from the unspent grant held from the prior year.

3.5 Resources

Usable receipts brought forward into 2024/25 totalled £12.108m of which £5.811m are unrestricted receipts that can be used for any capital scheme. £6.775m is restricted to the provision of new social housing (141 receipts). The 141 receipts are required to be used on the provision of new social housing, within five years of retention. The Council is usually required to match-fund the 141 receipts in the ratio of 50:50 but in July the Council received a letter from the Deputy Prime Minister which removed the requirement to match fund and instead new build expenditure can be funded in full by the 141 receipts. This flexibility is in place for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

7 Right to Buy sales have completed, giving rise to a capital receipt of £1.95m. Under the pooling of housing capital receipts rules a portion of this receipt would usually have to be paid to Central Government but in both 2022/23 and 2023/24 this requirement had been removed. The Council has recently been notified that the 100% retention of the Right to Buy receipts will now be extended indefinitely into future years. The Council will therefore keep the full £1.95m earned to date. For prudence the receipts received to date is the total for the projection – £1.55m for the provision of new homes and £0.40m is kept as a general receipt.

By the end of October 2024, capital receipts of just under £0.31m had been received arising from the Discounted Sales Scheme at The Bridge.

Stone Lodge site two completed in May 2024 giving rise to a capital receipt of £0.53m with a further payment due in May 2025 (£4.77m). In July the Council received £7.49m (after legal fees) for the deferred payment for Stone Lodge site one.

The projection for general capital receipts for the year is a total of £8.921m.

Grants and contributions brought forward from 2023/24 totalled £0.422m, a further £2.279m is due to be received this year to fund projects.

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Earmarked reserves are being used to fund the purchase of Copperfields, the outfield works at Hesketh Park and a small amount for the town centre transport and public realm improvements.

It is expected that all the 2024/25 expenditure can be funded within existing resources and within the budget envelope.

4 Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The capital programme covers many individual projects and will contribute to meeting many of the objectives in the Corporate Plan.

5 Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	As discussed in the report
Climate impact assessment	Climate impact assessments are completed by the project managers for individual projects.
Legal Implications	None. This report is compliant with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and CIPFA/SOLACE 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' Framework'
Public Sector Equality Duty	Assessments will be completed for every individual project where applicable
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None
Risk Assessment	There is a small risk of committed schemes needing to be curtailed due to lack of capital finance; this risk is mitigated by regular and sound budget monitoring and reporting.

6 Appendices

Appendix A Capital Programme, Planned Expenditure and Resources– Housing Projects 2024/25

Appendix B Capital Programme, Planned Expenditure and Resources – General Fund Projects 2024/25

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
			Catherine Bailey 01322 343312	Financial Services /Corporate Services	N/A

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - BUDGET & RESOURCES**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2024/25**

	CURRENT BUDGET 2024/25 £'000s	EXPENDITURE TO DATE 2024/25 £'000s	PROJECTED OUTTURN 2024/25 £'000s	VARIANCE 2024/25 £'000s
COUNCIL HOUSING PROJECTS				
Disabled Adaptations	343	171	343	0
Garage Improvements	500	296	500	0
Playground improvements	300	0	300	0
Temple Hill Community Centre Refurbishment	25	15	16	(9)
Supported Housing	191	41	100	(91)
New Homes	3,700	1,500	3,000	(700)
Handyman equipment & van	50	25	50	0
CCTV Communal Schemes	29	0	29	0
Decent homes works:				
Central heating renewals	800	186	800	0
Rewiring	300	102	300	0
Asbestos removal	75	42	90	15
Rising main replacement	30	0	32	2
Door replacements	150	60	190	40
Kitchen and bathrooms	1,000	503	1,300	300
External wall rendering	2,345	1,024	1,700	(645)
Energy efficiency improvement works	50	0	50	0
Door entry systems	75	32	75	0
Fascia /soffit replacements	150	0	150	0
Roof renewal	400	23	400	0
Roof tanks/water mains supply	50	0	20	(30)
Communal areas	800	163	500	(300)
External chimneys	25	0	25	0
Lift replacement	20	0	10	(10)
Major repairs	250	19	30	(220)
Window replacement	1,021	0	148	(873)
TOTAL: HRA PROJECTS	12,679	4,202	10,158	(2,521)
Resources				
	Brought Forward	Probable Additions/change s in Year	Used to Fund Capital Expenditure	Carried forward
Usable receipts (restricted)	0	0	0	0
1-4-1 receipts	6,775	1,550	(3,000)	5,325
Grants & contributions	0	189	(189)	0
Major repairs reserve	0	4,558	(4,558)	0
Revenue contribution	0	2,411	(2,411)	0
	6,775	8,708	-10,158	5,325

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - BUDGET & RESOURCES**GENERAL FUND 2024/25**

	CURRENT BUDGET 2024/25 £'000s	EXPENDITURE TO DATE 2024/25 £'000s	PROJECTED OUTTURN 2024/25 £'000s	VARIANCE 2024/25 £'000s
IT equipment	160	160	160	0
The Orchard Theatre	5,680	3,208	*5680	*0
Acacia Hall	0	16	16	16
Other corporate properties	30	0	30	0
Leisure and open spaces	200	49	249	49
Fairfield leisure centre carbon reduction works	1,492	682	1,492	0
Stone Lodge	1,077	13	270	(807)
Dartford town centre transport and public realm improvements	2,547	718	2,022	(525)
Columbaria	119	116	119	0
Civic Centre refurbishment internal repairs and improvements	203	0	142	(61)
Community infrastructure levy expenditure	7,043	658	2,370	(4,673)
Air quality monitoring station improvements	37	0	30	(7)
Manor gatehouse works	400	0	200	(200)
Environmental Improvements - ecology island & outdoor theatre	117	40	137	20
Home upgrade grant phase 2	1,035	84	639	(396)
Bottle banks for recycling sites	35	0	35	0
Watling Street cemetery mess room	25	0	25	0
Len Goodman tribute	26	0	26	0
Purchase of Copperfields	4,240	4,207	4,207	(33)
Hesketh Park Outfield Works	77	0	77	0
Housing projects:				
Disabled facilities grants	653	541	843	190
TOTAL: GENERAL FUND PROJECTS	25,196	10,492	18,769	(6,427)

Resources

	Brought Forward	Probable Additions in Year	Used to Fund Capital Expenditure	Carried forward
Usable receipts	5,811	8,921	(8,611)	6,121
Grants & contributions	422	2,279	(2,428)	273
Community infrastructure levy	35,786	5,000	(3,443)	37,343
Revenue contribution/reserves	0	4,287	(4,287)	0
	42,019	20,487	-18,769	43,737

* This project is expected to overspend - please see main report for comment